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# **The Ryukyuan Emigration Program to Bolivia as a Cold War Policy.**

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A sub-thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts (Asian  
Studies)

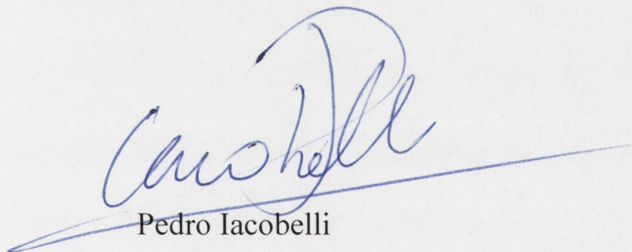
**Pedro Iacobelli D.**

**October 2010.**

The Australian National University

## **Declaration**

I, Pedro Iacobelli, declare that this sub-thesis, submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts (Asian Studies) at the Faculty of Asian Studies, Australia National University, Is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. This sub-thesis has not been submitted for qualifications at any other institution.



Pedro Iacobelli

October 2010



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## **Abstract**

This study deals with Cold War Okinawa and the genesis of the emigration program that was organised by the U.S. military during the 1950s. As result of the postwar agreements with Japan, the United States occupied the Ryukyu Islands and began to build a series of military complexes in the Island. The emigrational movement from Okinawa to Bolivia was part of a security policy planned by the U.S. authorities to maintain social and political stability in the Ryukyu Islands. Therefore, the study of the Okinawan emigration program in the 1950s highlights the fact that security considerations may play an important part in migration, and thus that both sender and receiver states may play a major role in international migration. The Ryukyuan emigration program is analyzed utilizing the Hegemonic Stability Theory since it can be applied to the relation between the world's hegemonic nation and international migration. The selection of Bolivia as the first hosting country is also studied since the U.S. authorities tried not only to put forward security policies in Okinawa but also assist friendly governments.



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## Introduction.

In 2004, to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the arrival of the first post-war Okinawan group to eastern Bolivia, representatives of the Japanese, Bolivian, and the United States governments and of Okinawa Prefecture gathered in “Colonia Okinawa I”.<sup>1</sup> On this occasion, a museum of immigration history, a memorial commemorating the dead and a statue of Victor Paz Estenssoro, Bolivian president who encouraged the Okinawan immigration in the 1950s, were inaugurated.<sup>2</sup> The attendance of the U.S. ambassador at the ceremony reflected the key role that that country had in the migration process. The government of the United States through the United States Government of the Ryukyu Islands (USCAR) and other agencies organised, promoted and funded the emigration of thousands of Okinawan people to Bolivia during the 1950s.

Naturally, the Ryukyu Islands as part of the Japanese Empire also took part in the emigrational wave to Latin America prior to World War II. The Japanese government through private immigration companies organised the emigration of Japanese people to Hawaii, Canada, U.S. and Mexico during the last decade of the nineteenth century.<sup>3</sup> However, due to the new immigration restrictions imposed by the U.S. in 1908 on migration to North America, the Japanese emigration changed destination towards Latin America particularly Brazil and Peru.<sup>4</sup> Bolivia was a minor receiver of Japanese/Okinawan immigrants during the wave before the World War II.

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<sup>1</sup> Kozy Amemiya, "Celebrating Okinawans in Bolivia," *The Ryukyuanist*, no. 65 (2004).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> James L. Tigner, "Japanese Immigration into Latin America: A Survey," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 23, no. 4 (1981). p.477.

<sup>4</sup> For early migration to U.S.; Brazil and Peru see: Eiichiro Azuma, "Japanese Migration: Historical Overview 1868 – 2000," in *Encyclopedia of Japanese Descendants in the Americas*, ed. Akemi Kihumura and Yano Imouye (New York: AltaMira Press, 2002). p.31 Robert J Smith, "The Ethnic Japanese in Brazil " *Journal of Japanese Studies* 5, no. 1 (1979). p.57. and Isabelle Lausent – Herrera, *Pasado Y Presente De La Comunidad Japonesa En El Peru Colección Mínima* (Lima: IEP, 1991). p.25.

Most of the immigrants who entered Bolivia did so after going to Peru or as rubber workers in the northwest of the country. When the rubber business declined they moved to the city of Riberalta.<sup>5</sup> The result of the pre-war Japanese immigration in Bolivia was a modest number of Okinawans (less than one hundred) in the east of the country.<sup>6</sup>

The Pacific war and the later allied occupation of Japan (1945-1952) and U.S. occupation of Okinawa (1945-1972) limited the emigration to those who were invited to migrate by relatives in foreign countries. Japan and Okinawa were occupied as result of the Pacific War and within few years they became involve in a new front. As Kimie Hara states, “before the war could be ended with clear settlements, Japan become involved in the ‘cold war’”.<sup>7</sup> This study deals with Cold War Okinawa and the emigration program that was organised by the U.S. military.

Due to the particularities of the Ryukyuan emigration program contemporary migration theories do not quite fit the Okinawan case.<sup>8</sup> Theories of migration most commonly highlight the economic “push” and “pull” factors that drive people to migrate. In the Ryukyu Islands the U.S. military government “directed” the emigration to Bolivia as the only option (at first) for the Okinawans willing to leave. Hence, the Okinawan emigrational movement in the early 1950s does not correspond exclusively with economic oriented theories since the hosting country was not chosen for the

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<sup>5</sup> Iyo Kunimoto, "Japanese Bolivian Historical Overview," in *Encyclopedia of Japanese Descendants in the Americas: An Illustrated History of the Nikkei*, ed. Akemi Kikumura-Yano (New York: AltaMira Press, 2002). pp.101-102.

<sup>6</sup> By 1941 the total number of Japanese in Bolivia was about 200 people. According to the data that J. Tigner gives 74 of them were Okinawans. Daniel Masterson and Sayaka Funada-Classen, *The Japanese in Latin America* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004). p.113. and James Lawrence Tigner, "The Ryukyans in Bolivia," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 43, no. 2 (1963). p.212.

<sup>7</sup> Kimi Hara, "50 Years from San Francisco: Re-Examining the Peace Treaty and Japan's Territorial Problems," *Pacific Affairs* 74, no. 3 (2001). p.381.

<sup>8</sup> The terms Okinawa and Ryukyu are used in this work as synonyms and they have no other meaning than the geographical.



immigrants.<sup>9</sup> Even though there were economic factors that propelled emigration, Bolivia in the 1950s was not richer than Okinawa and in fact in the late 1950s it was much poorer. In addition, most of the contemporary international migration theories are focused primarily on the policies of the receiving country rather than in the sender state; but, in the Ryukyuan emigration case, policies and the program of migration were organised from the sending state and the destination was almost irrelevant for the émigrés.<sup>10</sup> The Okinawan movement was not spontaneous but “encouraged” by the state; thus, the main focus needs to be put on the rationale behind the U.S. “direction” of the emigration movement as well as considering the socioeconomic causes that propelled migration.

My main argument is that during the Cold War United States’ strategic objectives in the region shaped the socio-political conditions of the Okinawan people. Consequently, the Ryukyu Emigration Program in 1950s was a reflection of the U.S. hegemonic position and its security policy in Asia. In other words, the emigrational movement from Okinawa to Bolivia was part of a security policy planned by the U.S. authorities to maintain social and political stability in the Ryukyu Islands and by extension to protect U.S. interests in the region.

I have found useful to approach the Ryukyuan emigration program from the “Hegemonic Stability Theory” (HST). Although this theory deals with the international economic system, it can be adapted to migration theories as some authors suggest.<sup>11</sup> The original HST suggests that international economic system is determined by the

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<sup>9</sup> A summary of economics oriented theories can be found in Douglas S. Massey et al., “Theories of International Migration: A Review and Appraisal,” *Population and Development Review* 19, no. 3 (1993). p.433-444.

<sup>10</sup> James F. Hollifield, “The Politics of International Migration: How Can We “Bring the State Back In”?,” in *Migration Theory: Talking across Disciplines*, ed. Caroline B. Brettelle and James F. Hollifield (New York: Routledge, 2000). pp.138-139.

<sup>11</sup> James F. Hollifield, “Migration and International Relations: Cooperation and Control in the European Community,” *International Migration Review* 26, no. 2 (1992).

distribution of power among states. In a hegemonic distribution of power a single state has a predominance of power that is most conducive to the establishment of a stable, open international economic system. The hegemon will be responsible for performing certain functions such as organize trade liberalization, manage international monetary system and so forth.<sup>12</sup> The United States was the hegemon in the years after the World War II until the emergence of other strong economies like Japan, Germany and the Soviet Union in the 1960s and 1970s. So during these about twenty years as hegemon the U.S. had the responsibility to provide stability to the liberal world. Following this reasoning, we could expect rules governing the movement of people to be influenced by the interests of the dominant state. This thesis approaches Okinawa migration in the 1950s by examining whether, in permitting emigration, the U.S. was providing a means to sustain the international order, not only in economic terms but also, in the context of a war against international communism, in political and strategic terms. In this sense, I will explore the hypothesis that the rationale behind the promotion of emigration to Bolivia and elsewhere was to protect the general U.S. interests in the Ryukyu Islands so as to ensure the fulfilment of its self-defined duty as guardian of the liberal world.

The bibliography dealing directly with the Okinawan emigration to Bolivia in the 1950s is limited. I have found the work of James Tigner, Amemiya Kozy and Suzuki Taku very enlightening. James Tigner was the academic that surveyed the Japanese communities in Latin America in the early 1950s so as to find a suitable location for the Okinawa emigration. His work for the U.S. military was the basis of his PhD dissertation in the 1950s and the core of his academic research. In sum, his contribution to the study of the early emigrational movement comes from his own experience as one of the architects of the emigration program. Amemiya Kozy, a

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<sup>12</sup> Michael C. Webb and Stephen D. Krasner, "Hegemonic Stability Theory: An Empirical Assessment," *Review of International Studies* 15, no. 2 (1989).



scholar of the Japan Policy Research Institute of the University of San Francisco, had published many articles and book chapters dealing with the issue. In my understanding she was the first to suggest that the Ryukyuan emigration program was organised to deal with the political (and not only demographic) situation in Okinawa. She has also highlighted the role of the local pre-war Okinawan Bolivian community in the immigration planning. Finally, Suzuki Taku from Denison University provides an anthropological perspective of the Okinawan communities in Bolivia.

As for primary sources utilized in this study, I have used concerning the United States government: the Foreign Relations of the United States series (FRUS) from 1949 until 1960 for both regions Japan and Latin America; The State Department Bulletin from 1950 to 1960, and some of the USCAR published materials found in the National Library of Australia and in the Menzies Library at the Australian National University. For ordinances, acts and laws concerning the Government of the Ryukyu Islands I have consulted the compendium of laws and regulation during the U.S. administration of Okinawa edited by the Gekkan Okinawa Sha. Also I had the opportunity to investigate in the National Archives of the United States, College Park, where I found information related with the emigration program and general documents about the U.S. military government in Okinawa. Finally, I have researched newspaper articles (Nippon Times and New York Times) and consulted articles written in the period in various magazines and journals.

My approach to the topic begins with an analysis of the conditions in Okinawa that propelled emigration. I then explore the U.S.' rationale to organise, fund and promoted the migration program. I also consider that there were also other factors involved in the migration movement such as the role of Bolivia in the U.S. hegemonic

plans in the other side of the Pacific or the role of the local Okinawan community in Bolivia.

This study is divided into three chapters. In Chapter One I discuss the process that left Okinawa under the control of the U.S. military particularly the San Francisco Peace Treaty's article III and the "Residual Sovereignty" concept. As I explain, these had an important bearing on postwar migration. In the second chapter I will analyse the process whereby the U.S. came to view the promotion of migration as a security policy in Okinawa. The American occupation and the militarization of the islands evoked discontent because of the social, economic, and political disruption to the lives of islanders. The emigration program was meant to deal both with these issues and with the increase of population. In the third chapter, I will discuss two different sets of connections that made the Ryukyu emigration program to Bolivia possible and convenient for the U.S. First, the relation between the U.S. and Bolivia in the 1950s; and second, the connections between the local Okinawan community in Bolivia and the U.S. authorities, particularly the role of James Tigner. Finally, I argue that the body of the immigrants came to represent and play a key role in global U.S. policies.

## CHAPTER 1

### **The Problem of the International Legal Status of the Ryukyu People during the American Occupation**

This chapter analyses the international legal status of Okinawa during the period of the American occupation. I will discuss the process that left Okinawa totally dependent of the U.S. military particularly the San Francisco Peace Treaty's article III and the "Residual Sovereignty" concept. This is relevant for the study of the Okinawan migration to Latin America since the construction of an ambiguous and U.S. dominated Okinawa's international status allowed the United States to pursue policy in the island without informing either the Japanese government or the United Nations. Also, the shaping of Okinawa's people nationality (or lack of one) after the Second World War needs to be considered as a cause that propelled emigration. Finally, the study of the process by which the U.S. military dominated the Ryukyu Islands shed lights on the American anti-communist discourse in East Asia.

From an historical perspective, the Okinawan people have had a constantly changing international status since the fifteen century and further there have been periods of long ambiguity in its international status. They were inhabitants of the independent Ryukyu Kingdom (unified in 1429) which engaged in trade with China as part of the latter's tribute system.<sup>13</sup> During the Ming dynasty in China, the Ryukyu Kingdom became a major agent in the entreport trade reaching ports in the Sea of Japan,

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<sup>13</sup> The Chinese concepts of Zhonggou and Tianxia describe the relationship between China and the rest of the world during this period see Edward Wang, "History, Space and Ethnicity: The Chinese World View," *Journal of World History* 16, no. 2 (1999). Pp. 287-288. For the Chinese tributary system see Gregory Smits, *Visions of Ryukyu, Identity and Ideology in Early-Modern Thought and Politics* (Honolulu: University of Hawai Press, 1999). pp. 35-36. For a classic study on this subject see J.K. Fairbanks and S.Y. Teng, "On the Ch' Ing Tributary System," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 6, no. 2 (1941).

Yellow Sea, North China Sea and South China Sea.<sup>14</sup> Then, during the reign of the Qing dynasty, the Okinawan people became ambivalent citizens of a state with two lords (Chinese empire and Satsuma daimyo).<sup>15</sup> In 1609 the Shimazu house invaded the Ryukyu Kingdom and since Satsuma's main interest was to foster trade with China through Okinawa, the government in Shuri was allowed to rule the kingdom whilst maintaining tributary trade with both China and Satsuma.<sup>16</sup> Finally, Meiji Japan, using the discourse of enlightening its neighbours, ended up colonising and annexing some of them.<sup>17</sup> In 1879 the Ryukyu kingdom was formally abolished and reorganised as Okinawa Prefecture, ruled by a governor appointed by the central government in Tokyo.<sup>18</sup> Okinawa's international legal status changed once more during the end of the Pacific war. The war and the period that immediately followed it resulted in the status of Okinawa, as part of Imperial Japan, being transformed by the terms of the Potsdam declaration into the temporary status of occupied enemy territory.

My main argument in this chapter is that in order to pursue their strategic aims in the Pacific and Asia during the first years of the Cold War, the American authorities (particularly in the Department of State) designed an ambiguous international legal status for the Okinawan people so that they could: a) retain Okinawa under U.S.

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<sup>14</sup> George H. Kerr, *Okinawa, the History of an Island People*, 1969 ed. (Rutland, Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1958). pp. 124-135. Some authors consider this period from late fourteen century to early sixteen century to be the most prosperous age in history of the Ryukyu kingdom. See Mitsugu Matsuda Atsushi Kobata, *Ryukyuan Relation with Korea and South Sea Countries: An Annotated Translation of the Documents in the Rekidai Hoan* (Atsushi Kobata, 1969). p. v.

<sup>15</sup> For an analysis of the geopolitical consequences of the change of Chinese dynasty for the maritime trade see Wang, "History, Space and Ethnicity: The Chinese World View." p.304. and for the Chinese-European relations see D.E. Mungello, *The Great Encounter of China and the West, 1500-1800* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1999). pp.11-18.

<sup>16</sup> Smits, *Visions of Ryukyu, Identity and Ideology in Early-Modern Thought and Politics*. p.18. The relationship between Japan, the Ryukyu kingdom and the Chinese empire formed a triangle that lasted from 1609 to 1879. Glenn Hook and Richard Siddle, "Introduction," in *Japan and Okinawa: Structure and Subjectivity*, ed. Glenn D. Hook and Richard Siddle (London: Routledge Curzon, 2003). p.1.

<sup>17</sup> Prasenjit Duara, "The Global and Regional Constitution of Nations: The View from East Asia," *Nations and Nationalism* 14, no. 2 (2008). pp.21-23.

<sup>18</sup> Kerr, *Okinawa, the History of an Island People*. pp. 382-400.

military control, b) transform the archipelago into a main military hub in the Pacific, and c) appease the Japanese government claims of sovereignty. The term *international status* is defined in this work as the understanding from the international community of the citizenship position of the inhabitants of the Ryukyu Islands. Similarly, the term *international legal status* refers to the recognition of the international status of the archipelago in legal instruments. In other words, both terms refer to the recognition from other states of the citizenship of the Okinawa's people.

I will examine in this chapter two aspects: the resulting human and international legal position of the Okinawa's people immediate after the war, and then, the process whereby the American authorities articulated a new international legal status for the Okinawa prefecture.

### 1.1. The "Typhoon of Steel" and the Post-War Situation.

It was in the last phase of the Second World War, after the Allies' victory in Iwo Jima and when the Japanese Empire had lost almost all the territories conquered during the war, that the U.S. troops began the invasion of Okinawa. This battle is considered the bloodiest battle fought in the Pacific.<sup>19</sup> It started with air raids of U.S. B-29 over the main cities and then was followed by the invasion by U.S. troops. The battle began on March 26, 1945 when U.S. forces landed in Kerama Islands and concluded on September 7, 1945 when the Japanese Defence Task Forces of the Southwestern Islands signed the surrender document.<sup>20</sup> This battle and the war in general, changed the lives of the survivors and their international status.

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<sup>19</sup> James H. Hallas, *Killing Ground on Okinawa: The Battle for Sugar Loaf Hill* (Westport: Praeger, 1996). P.1.

<sup>20</sup> Masahide Ota, "Re-Examining the History of the Battle of Okinawa," in *Okinawa: Cold War Island*, ed. Chalmers Johnson (Cardiff: Japan Policy Research Institute, 1999). Pp.13-14. Most textbooks date the Battle of Okinawa between April 1<sup>st</sup> and June 23<sup>rd</sup> of 1945. However, I consider Ota's dates to be more

In terms of the human toll, the civilians during the battle suffered all the horrors of the war. The Battle of Okinawa resulted in a civilian catastrophe where people, as Bill Sloan described it, “(...) died like flies without regard to age gender, or degree of innocence. Frail old men, pregnant women, mother clutching newborns, round-faced toddlers, barefoot cripples, sailor-suited school girls -an estimated 140,000 in all maybe more. Almost every surviving Okinawa combat veteran saw civilians who had been killed, civilians being killed, or civilians killing themselves.”<sup>21 22</sup> Although, there is no definitive number of civilian casualties, it is believed that around 200,000 people in total died and many more were injured.<sup>23</sup>

The international status of the survivors was defined by the situation of war between the U.S. and Japan; hence, from the end of the battle of Okinawa until the enforcement of the San Francisco Peace Treaty in April 1952, the Ryukyu Islands remained occupied enemy territory.<sup>24</sup> Although this was a temporary situation, at the time no one (including the occupiers) had a clear image of the definitive international legal status which the Ryukyu Islands should have after the end of the occupation situation. The official war covenants did not say much about this particular aspect. The Cairo Communiqué vaguely stated that “Japan will also be expelled from all other territories she has taken by violence or greed” but failed to name which ones. The Yalta Agreement did not mention nor allude in any way to the Ryukyu Islands and finally the Potsdam

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inclusive with the events that happened in Kerama islands in March and also with the events after the suicide of the officers in command of the Japanese 32<sup>nd</sup> Army (June 23<sup>rd</sup>) such as localized combat between the U.S. troops and some of the officials that were hidden in caves.

<sup>21</sup> Bill Sloan, *The Ultimate Battle: Okinawa 1945 -the Last Epic Struggle of World War II* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2007). p.296.

<sup>22</sup> For testimonies of the battle of Okinawa see Hiromichi Yahara, *The Battle for Okinawa*, trans. Roger Pineau and Masatoshi Uehara (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1995). p.105. and George Feifer, *Tennozan: The Battle of Okinawa and the Atomic Bomb* (New York: Ticknor & Fields, 1992). p.446.

<sup>23</sup> This figure includes military personnel. <http://www.peace-museum.pref.okinawa.jp/english/museum/permanent/2.html> visited on April 7, 2010.

<sup>24</sup> Arnold G. Fisch, *Military Government in the Ryukyu Islands. 1945 -1950*, 2005 ed. (Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 1988). P.4.

Declaration, in one infamous sentence, consolidated the aura of ambiguity surrounding the future of the islands when stated that the Japanese sovereignty shall be limited to the main four island and “such minor islands as we determine”.<sup>25</sup> Also, following the Atlantic Charter and the Cairo Communiqué, the U.S. (the occupying force) could not seek aggrandisement and thus could not attempt to annex Okinawa as they had done in the past with other territories; for instance, with Guam in 1898.<sup>26</sup> In sum, the issue of Okinawa remained until 1951 a corollary to the issue of a peace treaty between Japan and former enemies.<sup>27</sup>

Finally, Okinawa also had a changing status within the U.S. military. The U.S. Navy was the military branch responsible for the administration of occupied Okinawa during the last weeks of the Second World War until July 1946 when it surrendered all administrative authority to the Army. The Ryukyu Islands were from 1947, under the jurisdiction of the General Head Quarters of the Far East Command GHG/FECOM.<sup>28</sup> General Douglas MacArthur, Commander in Chief Far East from December 1946 and therefore in charge of occupied Okinawa, contributed to downgrading the status of Okinawa within the American occupation structure by appointing men that he did not consider good enough to be close to him in Japan to serve there.<sup>29</sup> To a certain extent, Okinawa was the American version of a place of exile: a duty station to which only the worst were sent. Frank Gibney reported in *Time* magazine in 1949, that the morale and

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<sup>25</sup> For the Cairo Communiqué see

[http://www.ndl.go.jp/constitution/e/shiryo/01/002\\_46/002\\_46tx.html](http://www.ndl.go.jp/constitution/e/shiryo/01/002_46/002_46tx.html); for the Yalta Agreement see <http://www.ndl.go.jp/constitution/e/etc/c04.html>; and for the Potsdam declaration, <http://www.international.ucla.edu/eas/documents/potsdam.htm>, all sites visited on April 7, 2010.

<sup>26</sup> From 1944, Guam was initially designed as a naval station under naval military government. It is today an unincorporated territory of the U.S. Kensei Yoshida, *Democracy Betrayed: Okinawa under U.S. Occupation*, ed. Edward H. Kaplan, vol. 23, *Studies on East Asia* (Bellingham: Western Washington University, 2001). pp.xiv-xvi.

<sup>27</sup> Fisch, *Military Government in the Ryukyu Islands. 1945-1950*. p.55.

<sup>28</sup> Eiji Takemae, *Inside G.H.Q. : The Allied Occupation of Japan and Its Legacy*, trans. Robert Ricketts and Sebastian Swann (New York: Continuum, 2002). pp.121-123.

<sup>29</sup> John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1999). p.222.



discipline of U.S. troops in Okinawa “have probably been worse than that of any U.S. force in the world(...)”.<sup>30</sup> The military structure governing Okinawa was again changed in December 1950 when the United States Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands (USCAR) was formed.<sup>31</sup> In the new structure the Commander in Chief, Far East was the Governor of Okinawa. The Commanding General, Ryukyu Command was the Deputy Governor (and from 1957 called High Commissioner), and the military structure was completed with the “Civil Administrator” who was until 1962 an army active duty member, usually an Army Brigadier General.<sup>32</sup>

The battle of Okinawa radically changed the situation of the inhabitants of the island in many respects. The hardship of the battle was a traumatic experience for the survivors since it cost the lives of a significant percentage of the local population, injured many more and destroyed the productivity in the island. But what is more significant for the purpose of this study, the triumph of the U.S. troops in Okinawa changed the international status of the islands to occupied enemy territory. Even though the nature of the international status for the islands was temporary, by the end of the war the future of the archipelago and its inhabitants remained uncertain.

## 1.2. Creating a new international legal status for Okinawa.

By the end of the war in September 1945 Japan was occupied by allied forces. However the status of Okinawa did not follow the same pattern as mainland Japan. On

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<sup>30</sup> Frank Gibney, "Okinawa: Forgotten Island," *TIME*, Nov. 28, 1949.

<sup>31</sup> Mikio Higa, *Politics and Parties in Postwar Okinawa* (Vancouver University of British Columbia, 1963). pp.23-24.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

the contrary, the Ryukyu Islands once again, had their international - legal- status modified by an external power in the San Francisco Peace Treaty of 1951 (SFPT).<sup>33</sup>

#### 1.2.1. Cold War context and the NSC 13/3.

Although there is not a precise date for stating the beginning of the Cold War, by the end of the 1940s the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. had already taken antagonist positions in world's geopolitics.<sup>34</sup> The civil war in China and the subsequent Communist victory in addition to the war in Korea gave to the Cold War a definitive Asian flavour at least during its first years. Consequently, the American authorities needed to adjust their plans in the region particularly in Japan in response to the new context, so (after initially focusing on policies to “punish” Japan) they decided to adopt a “reverse course” and begin rearming their former enemy as a Cold War partner with the assistance of less liberal elements of Japanese society.<sup>35</sup> Likewise, although the Secretary of State James F. Byrnes once suggested the return of the Ryukyu Islands to Japan, Okinawa was seen by the U.S. authorities (particularly the military) as a vital base during the Cold War.

The American policy in Asia was strongly influenced by the outcome of the Chinese civil war. One of the lessons from that conflict was that American aid was not enough for securing the U.S. position in any territory. As Secretary Acheson stated in August 1949, “the situation in China serves to emphasize a vital factor in connection with the question of United States aid to foreign nations (...), it cannot guarantee that that aid

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<sup>33</sup> As mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, the term international legal status refers to the recognition in a legal instrument of the international status of Japan.

<sup>34</sup> The Yalta agreement in 1945 together with the Churchill's Iron curtain speech (1946), the enactment by the Congress of the Truman doctrine (1947) and the Berlin blockade (1948-9) are good examples of the division of the world in the second half of the 1940s.

<sup>35</sup> Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II*. Pp.23-24.

will achieve its purpose.”<sup>36</sup> In his opinion, stated a few months later, the reason for the communist victory lay primarily in the bad governance of the Nationalist Government which ignored the needs of the Chinese people, leaving them open to the appeal of communism.<sup>37</sup> If aid was not sufficient to halt communism, other policies had to be taken in order to secure American interests in the region.

The Military and staff of the Department of State discussed the future of Okinawa within this new context on a number of occasions. For instance, Max W. Bishop, (Chief of the Division of Northeast Asian Affairs) at a meeting with William J. Sebald and D. MacArthur in February 1949 stated that “the Department of State had attached great importance to the rapid development of Okinawa as a strong base (...) and had shown its willingness to support in every feasible way the military development of our position in Okinawa”.<sup>38</sup> Similarly, as reported by W.J. Sebald, General MacArthur considered that the westernmost line of defence of the U.S. should be in the Pacific island chain from Kamchatka southward to and including the Philippines.<sup>39</sup> This idea was echoed by the Secretary Acheson when he explained in the National Press Club that “This defensive perimeter runs along the Aleutians to Japan and then goes to the Ryukyus. We hold important defense positions in the Ryukyu Islands, and those we will continue to hold”.<sup>40</sup> Since it was clear for military men and officers of the State Department that the U.S. position in Okinawa needed to be held, it was a natural step for the National Security Council to make the possession of Okinawa a national policy.

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<sup>36</sup> Dean Acheson, "Basic Principles of the U.S. Policy Towards the Far East," *The Department of State Bulletin* XXI, no. 528 (1949). P.236.

<sup>37</sup> Dean Acheson, "Crisis in Asia -an Examination of the U.S. Policy," *The Department of State Bulletin* XXII, no. 551 (1950). Pp.111-118.

<sup>38</sup> Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1949*, vol. VII, The Far East and Australasia (in two parts) Part 2. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1976). p.655.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.* pp.648-649.

<sup>40</sup> Acheson, "Crisis in Asia -an Examination of the U.S. Policy." p.116.

In the document “Report by the National Security Council on Recommendations with Respects to United States Policy Toward Japan”, also known by its code NSC 13/3, which was adopted at the NSC’s 23rd meeting May 6, 1949 as a revision of NSC 13/2 (October 1948) the National Security Council defined a significant part of the future of the Ryukyu islanders.<sup>41</sup> This document was a response to the Communist advance in China and thus called for a postponement of the peace treaty with Japan so that the U.S. position in the archipelago could remain unaltered. Since the National Security Council felt that the communist expansion was a threat to U.S. interests, one of the main objectives of this document was to emphasize the security requirement that a treaty with Japan should have. Therefore, the positions expressed in the document were in most cases the base of the treaty of 1951. With respect to Okinawa, article 5 of NSC 13/3 confirms U.S. intentions to “retain on a long-term basis the facilities at Okinawa and such other facilities as are deemed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to be necessary in the Ryukyu Islands (...) the military bases at or near Okinawa should be developed accordingly”, therefore the document is clear in stating that the time duration of the occupation or at least the presence of bases, was expected to be long term. But this also suggests the long term responsibilities of the U.S. agencies involved in the government of the civilians: “The United States agencies responsible for administering the above-mentioned islands should promptly formulate and carry out a program on a long-term basis for the economic and social well-being and, to the extent practicable, for the eventual reduction to a minimum of the deficit in the economy of the natives.” The NSC 13/3 can be considered to be a response to Communism, but also, a recognition that in order to secure a vital position in the line of defence, the U.S. could no longer rely in aid to the native population as the only means to consolidate their position.

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<sup>41</sup> Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1949*. pp.730-736.

In other documents such as the NSC 49 and the NSC 60/1 the National Security Council complemented the view that bases in Okinawa and the administration of the former prefecture should remain under U.S. control. In this regard, the NSC 60/1 of September 1950 expressed the view that a future treaty with Japan must guarantee the U.S. "Exclusive strategic control" of the Ryukyu.<sup>42</sup> The documents produced within the NSC show a position of power and control over Okinawa.<sup>43</sup> In this regard, the Korean War (1950-1953) hastened the conclusion of the Peace Treaty that shaped the final international legal status of the Ryukyu, but the basic principles concerning Okinawa were set before the civil war in the Korean peninsula.

#### 1.2.2. Discussion about the international legal status.

Although the U.S. national policy towards Okinawa was clear about the need to control the islands in a long-term basis, it was still necessary to give this control a form that other countries could recognize and accept in a peace treaty. To this end, different actors within the U.S. politics and bureaucracy took part in the process of wording of a final document. Among the parties in the discussion the U.S. Department of State had a leading role, also the Military and to a lesser degree other governments including the Japanese discussed the future international status of the Ryukyu Islands.<sup>44</sup> The role of the Japanese in the discussion related with the Ryukyu Islands was modest since they focused their limited political strength on other articles of the treaty such as reparations.<sup>45</sup> Similarly, the U.S. congress did not have much participation in the

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<sup>42</sup> Quoted in Yoshida, *Democracy Betrayed: Okinawa under U.S. Occupation*. p.45.

<sup>43</sup> Position that in the 1950s meant not only the construction of more bases but also hosting nuclear weapons. See Robert S. Norris, William M. Arkin, and William Burr, "Where They Were," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 55, no. 6 (Nov/Dec1999). And Robert S. Norris, William M. Arkin, and William Burr, "How Much Did Japan Know?," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 56, no. 1 (Jan/Feb 2000).

<sup>44</sup> Yoshida, *Democracy Betrayed: Okinawa under U.S. Occupation*. pp.17-26.

<sup>45</sup> Nevertheless, the Japanese expressed that it would be a serious mistake to the Ryukyu from Japan and solicited reconsideration and a close economic connection with Japan. See Department of State,

discussion about the peace treaty.<sup>46</sup> Academics also took part in the general discussion about the future of Okinawa. For instance, Edwin O. Reischauer in his 1950's edition of "The United States and Japan" suggested two reasonable solutions for the problem: either making the Ryukyu Islands an integral part of Japan or make it a trusteeship territory under the U.S. control. The option of a trusteeship would have strategic advantage for the U.S. but on the other hand, the main difficulty –according to Reischauer- could be dealing with the large body of inassimilable aliens and also relegating the Ryukyu indefinitely to the status of a colonial people. For Reischauer the best option was to keep any Ryukyu trusteeship as small as possible and to return the other islands to Japan.<sup>47</sup>

The trusteeship option for The Ryukyu Island was increasingly seen as the most suitable option by the treaty makers. The U.S. as trustee of Okinawa would have full management and administrative rights over the islands and at the same time, it will be clear for the international society that the U.S. would work for the promotion of the inhabitants' human rights and political, social, economical advancement.<sup>48</sup> However, the terms for the trusteeship and relevant issues such as the duration of the trusteeship needed to be discussed first. On this matter, Reischauer was correct when he mentioned that the relation with the local people would be difficult. As reported by the Director of the Office of Far Easter Affairs W.W. Butterworth, increasing anti-U.S. feeling was complicating the implementation of the NSC 13/3 and as Douglas L. Oliver suggested

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*Foreign Relations of the United States, 1951*, vol. VI, Asia and the Pacific (in two parts) Part 1. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1977). pp. 811; 833; 960-961;1163. For a foreign observant of the process, the general knowledge that the Japanese had about Okinawa was very limited since they "knew little or nothing about Okinawa" See E.G. Seidensticker, "The View from Okinawa," *Japan Quarterly* VI, no. 1 (1959). p.37.

<sup>46</sup> Ralph Braibanti, "The Ryukyu Islands: Pawn of the Pacific," *The American Political Science Review* XXVIII, no. 4 (1954). p.974.

<sup>47</sup> Edwin O. Reischauer, *The United States and Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950). pp.237-239.

<sup>48</sup> Boleslaw Boczek, *International Law: A Dictionary* (Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2005). p.142.

after surveying the islands, a long term occupation was not recommendable.<sup>49</sup> However, from the NSC13/3, the control of Okinawa had become a national policy projected in a long-term basis; and therefore, a better understanding between the local people and the occupiers needed to be arranged in order to proceed with the trusteeship option. This was the main reason for creating the Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Island, an organ that could “develop and maintain the well-being of the civil population and not prejudice ultimate decisions with respect to the international status of the Islands and their form of government”.<sup>50</sup> By the end of 1949 and in 1950 the idea of the regular trusteeship had gained important adherents.<sup>51</sup> Secretary Acheson confirmed the official position of his department by announcing that: “In the interest of the population of the Ryukyu Islands, we will at an appropriate time offer to hold these islands under trusteeship of the United Nations.”<sup>52 53</sup> Hence, the trusteeship option together with a civil administration of the islands was considered by the official American establishment as the best alternative to fulfill the NSC 13/3 guidelines, and as a result it was included in all treaty drafts from February 1951.<sup>54</sup> In this context the international legal status of Okinawa could have changed from the current status of occupied enemy

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<sup>49</sup> Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1949*. p.815. Also William Sebald opposed the option for a long-term occupation. Yoshida, *Democracy Betrayed: Okinawa under U.S. Occupation*. p.45.

<sup>50</sup> *Proposed Directive by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Commander in Chief, Far East (MacArthur)*. Washington. November 30, 1949. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1949*. p.914.

<sup>51</sup> For example the special assistant of J.F. Dulles, John Allison. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1951*. p.795.

<sup>52</sup> Acheson, "Crisis in Asia -an Examination of the U.S. Policy." p.116. and also see Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950*, vol. VI, East Asia and the Pacific (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1976). Pp.1161-1163. Moreover in the draft of the peace treaty in August 1950, Dulles left the issue to the United Nations to extend the trusteeship system to all or part of the Ryukyu and Bonin Islands. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950*. p.1268. On the other hand, the governments of New Zealand and Canada supported the idea of a full sovereignty for the U.S. over the Ryukyu Islands. See Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1951*. pp.1057-1062.

<sup>53</sup> Also, U.S. partners encouraged that option. See Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1951*. pp.909-910; 921.

<sup>54</sup> For example, *Ibid.* p.850.



to inhabitants of a trust territory, protected by the U.N. Charter but still with a very unclear future.

In the United Nations Charter, the mandate system, which had been used by the prewar League of Nations, was replaced by the trusteeship system. The former provided a mild form of international accountability for administration of mandate territories.<sup>55</sup> The latter came to mean actual supervision by the U.N of trust territories' administration.<sup>56</sup> The aim of the Trusteeship System according to the charter is to assist the trust territory to attain self governance. In the Trusteeship System there are three categories of territories subject to the trusteeship: a- Former Mandates; b- ex-enemy territories; c- territories voluntarily placed under the system by states responsible for their administration.<sup>57</sup> However there are two main limitations to making a territory the subject of a trusteeship. First, no member of the United Nations is eligible to become a trust territory and second, an independent non member state cannot be put in the Trusteeship System because it has already attained self-governance.

Nevertheless, the trusteeship option presented its own inconveniences. In first place, the U.S. needed to justify the change of status of the Ryukyu Island to a trust territory before the United Nations. This was not particularly difficult since there were two reasonable options for the U.S. to apply the Trusteeship System to Okinawa according to the U.N. Charter article 77. As mentioned above, the U.S could have presented the case of the Ryukyu as a territory detached from an enemy state as result of the Second World War, or the U.S. could have arranged with Japan to place the territory under the

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<sup>55</sup> George Thullen, *Problems of the Trusteeship System : A Study of Political Behavior in the United Nations* (Geneve: Librairie Droz, 1964). p.11.

<sup>56</sup> In the Mandates System, the Permanent Mandate Commission of the League of Nations was responsible for supervising the mandates territories but in the practice it did not have real power Ibid. p.12.

<sup>57</sup> Chairmian Edwards Toussaint, *The Trusteeship System of the United Nations* (London: Stevens & Sons, 1956). pp.39-42.

system voluntarily.<sup>58</sup> A more serious issue was that if Japan became a full member of the United Nations (which happened in 1956), the trusteeship system could not apply to its territory, because the relationship among members “shall be based on respect for the principle of sovereign equality”.<sup>59</sup> This point could have endangered the U.S. long-term possession of the archipelago since Japan after becoming member of the U.N. could request the reduction of troops in Okinawa or even the departure of all of them. Also, in the case of Japan’s entrance to the U.N. and the return of the Ryukyu Islands to Japan, the people of Okinawa had to receive the same rights as the Japanese from mainland, thus increasing the civil participation against the U.S. presence, and all during the time of the Cold War. Finally, the trusteeship option would have made the U.S. position susceptible of criticism from the Security Council of the U.N.<sup>60</sup> If the U.S. had chosen to place the Ryukyu Island within the Trusteeship System they would have probably catalogued it as a *Strategic Area* and thus bypassed the scrutiny of the General Assembly but not the Security Council, the only organ with the authority to approve or reject the trusteeship agreement.<sup>61</sup> Even though the Trusteeship System offered a proper frame for attaining the U.S. strategic objectives in Okinawa (at least in a short-term), the potential conflicts within the Trusteeship System made this option less suitable for the long-term aspiration of the U.S. authorities over the Ryukyu Islands.

The situation for John F. Dulles, Consultant to the Secretary and main architect of the Peace Treaty with Japan, was not easy. He needed to meet the guidelines of the

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<sup>58</sup> Leland M. Goodrich and Edvard Hambro, *Charter of the United Nations: Commentary and Documents* (Boston: World Peace Foundation, 1946).p.357.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid. In the history of the Trusteeship System the only case of making an ex enemy territory a trust territory was when Somalia was trusted to Italy, its former colonial power. There are no cases of territories voluntarily placed under the system by states responsible for their administration. Toussaint, *The Trusteeship System of the United Nations*. p.40.

<sup>60</sup> And not as Kensei Yoshida suggested from the General Assembly. Yoshida, *Democracy Betrayed: Okinawa under U.S. Occupation*. p.49.

<sup>61</sup> Goodrich and Hambro, *Charter of the United Nations: Commentary and Documents* pp.359-360.

National Security Council which required a total control of the islands, and on the other hand the aspirations of the Japanese people and the own American commitment of no aggrandizement. So he decided to obtain in the peace treaty an option to seek trusteeship if desired, but in the meantime have full control of the island. As Dulles explained to the Far East Sub-Committee of Senate Foreign Relations Committee in March 19, 1951:

“The treaty should give the U.S. the right to apply for a trusteeship if desired. What we should ultimately do with the Ryukyu, he suggested, should be made the subject of a special inquiry, probably including sending someone out there. The United States should not commit itself in the treaty but should simply obtain an option to seek a trusteeship if it desired. Senator Smith noted that the draft would permit the United States to retain control of the Ryukyus indefinitely if a trusteeship were not secured, and inquired whether this would not lay us open to charges of imperialism. Ambassador Dulles suggested that the provision be allowed to stand until the attitude of other countries could be ascertained.”<sup>62</sup>

Therefore, he concluded a formula by which Japan would retain formal sovereignty over the island but the United States would exercise administrative rights. In the article 3 of the SFPT the situation of Okinawa was stated as follows.

“Japan will concur in any proposal of the United States to the United Nations to place under its trusteeship system, with the United States as the sole administering authority, Nansei Shoto south of 29deg. north latitude (including the Ryukyu Islands and the Daito Islands), Nanpo Shoto south of Sofu Gan (including the Bonin Islands,

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<sup>62</sup> Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1951*. p.933. For another document stating Dulles position see Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1951*. p.841.

Rosario Island and the Volcano Islands) and Parece Vela and Marcus Island. Pending the making of such a proposal and affirmative action thereon, the United States will have the right to exercise all and any powers of administration, legislation and jurisdiction over the territory and inhabitants of these islands, including their territorial waters.”<sup>63</sup>

Later, during the second Plenary Session of the SFPT Conference on September 5<sup>th</sup>, Dulles called this policy *Residual Sovereignty*, which was received in varying ways by the international society, Japanese people and Okinawans.<sup>64</sup> Forty eight nations agreed with the terms of the SFPT and agreed with the idea of leaving the Ryukyu Islands in a sort of legal limbo between an occupied enemy territory and a trust territory.<sup>65</sup> The strongest opposition to this point came from the USSR delegate Andrei Gromyko who charged that “transfer of the Ryukyus chain, including Okinawa, to the U.S. custody was illegal”.<sup>66</sup> However, his position about the Ryukyu contrasted with the one concerning the Kurile Islands, also severed from Japan after the war but in his country’s favor.<sup>67</sup> Conversely, in Okinawa and in the rest of Japan, the people considered that the trusteeship was a *fait accompli*. A survey conducted by Asahi Shimbun and replicated in the Nippon Times shows that after the signature of the treaty 6% of the Japanese people responded “Trusteeship control of the southern islands” when being asked about the points of disaffection in the treaty.<sup>68</sup> As reported by the Nippon Times, the pact was said to be accepted calmly in Okinawa, and in a note from the Governor of Okinawa he

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<sup>63</sup> “Treaty of Peace with Japan” in UCLA East Asia Studies Documents at <http://www.international.ucla.edu/eas/documents/peace1951.htm> Visited on April 7, 2010.

<sup>64</sup> Higa, *Politics and Parties in Postwar Okinawa*. pp. 10-12.

<sup>65</sup> Twenty Latin American nations signed the treaty including Bolivia.

<sup>66</sup> Nippon Times, “Excerpts from Gromyko Speech,” Sept. 7 1951.

<sup>67</sup> Also during the pre conference negotiations the government of India rejected the idea and thus did not attend the SFP Conference. See Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1951*. pp. 1062; 1269-70; 1288-1291.

<sup>68</sup> Nippon Times, “Public Opinion Survey on the Japanese Peace Treaty,” Sept. 25, 1951.

stated that: Although the islands will go under U.S. trusteeship, we expect that the actual enforcement of the trusteeship will be based, to the maximum, on the inhabitants' desire to have their land returned to Japan".<sup>69</sup> The general impression was that sooner rather than later Okinawa would be a formal trust territory; however, the intentions of the U.S. government were far from making a formal proposal to the United Nations to include the Ryukyu Islands in the Trusteeship System. Rather, Article III and the Residual Sovereignty concept confused even more the already complex international legal status of the Ryukyu Islands and became the political administrative basis from where the U.S. government could maintain control of the Ryukyus for twenty years.<sup>70</sup>

### 1.2.3. SFPT and International Legal Status of Okinawa.

The San Francisco peace Treaty of 1951 created an aura of uncertainty concerning the international legal status of the Ryukyu Islands and its inhabitants. They would be classified "Ryukyuans" under U.S. administration. So they were neither Japanese nor American with the protection of neither the Japanese or American constitution.<sup>71</sup> The SFPT left Okinawa in a position of ongoing ambiguity since no further step to clarify the international status of the Ryukyus could be taken without the concurrence of the United States. One year after the signature of the peace treaty, the incumbent American ambassador in Tokyo Robert Murphy (a complete novice in Asian Affairs) stated to the

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<sup>69</sup> Nippon Times, "Pact Said Accepted Calmly in Okinawa," Sept. 15 1951.

<sup>70</sup> Rosa Caroli, *Il Mito Dell'Omogeneita Giapponese : Storia Di Okinawa* (Rome: Franco Angelini, 1999). p.203.

<sup>71</sup> Yoshida, *Democracy Betrayed: Okinawa under U.S. Occupation*. p.51. Rosa Caroli suggests that Ryukyu Islands became a 'terra senza status'. Caroli, *Il Mito Dell'Omogeneita Giapponese : Storia Di Okinawa*. p.191.

Nippon Times that the trusteeship of the Ryukyu was “under study”, but the trusteeship never was materialized.<sup>72</sup>

The status of the Ryukyu population was, however, very clear for the American authorities in Okinawa. Even before the SFPT, in the Military Government Ordinance No 22 of 1950 when the Ryukyu Islands were divided in the four archipelagos (*gunto*) an inhabitant of the *gunto* was defined as the person who “has been born within the Ryukyu Islands and retained residence in the city, town or village within the *gunto* or who has come from without the Islands and established residence within the same with the intention of remaining permanently” granting them the right to move from one *gunto* to another (but not to migrate into or out of the Ryukyus).<sup>73</sup> Later, during the establishment of the government of the Ryukyu Islands in the Civil Administration proclamation No. 13 of 1952, the *Ryukyuan*s were stated to enjoy “basic liberties of democratic countries, including freedom of religion, speech, assembly, petition and press”.<sup>74</sup> Therefore, for the local authorities the status of the Ryukyuan was defined by the place where they were born (a child of a Ryukyuan born overseas was thus not Ryukyuan) and they enjoyed basic liberties but not the right to move out of their country freely.<sup>75</sup>

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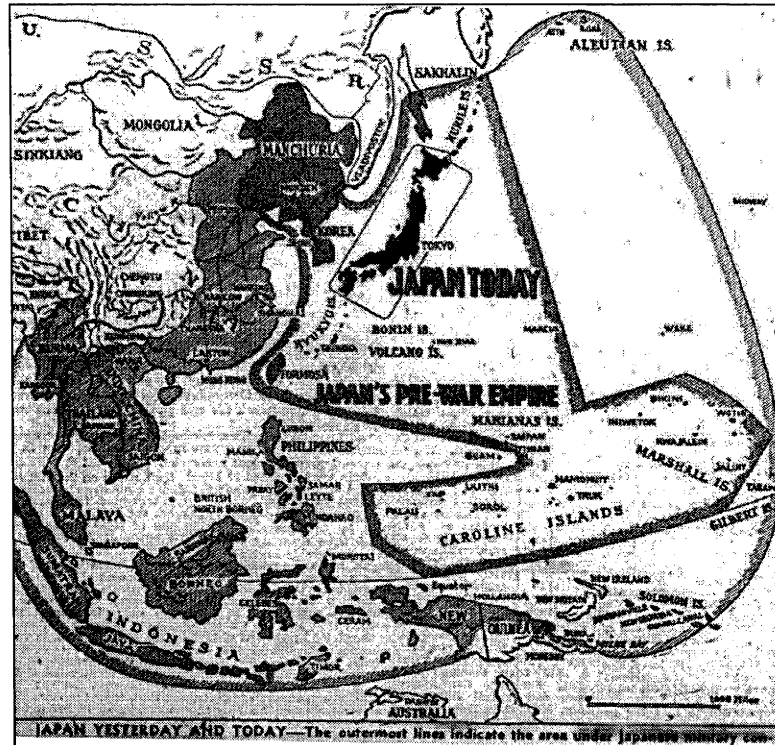
<sup>72</sup> Nippon Times, “Ryukyu Question Said under Study,” April 22, 1952. For a brief profile of Ambassador Murphy see H.W. Brands, “The United States and the Reemergence of Independent Japan,” *Pacific Affairs* 59, no. 3 (1986). P.393.

<sup>73</sup> M.G. Ordinance 22, “The Law concerning the organization of the Gunto government” August 4, 1950. in United States Civil Administration:1950 - 1972, *Laws and Regulations During the U.S. Administration of Okinawa: 1945-1972*, ed. Gekkan Okinawa sha, vol. Book 1 (n/d).

<sup>74</sup> C.A. Proclamation No. 13 “Establishment of Government of the Ryukyu Islands” 1952, in Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> In the case of identifying themselves, the fishermen had to identify their vessels with a special flag, consisting of the international Code Flag D, with an equilateral triangle cut from the fly. C.A. Ordinance No. 65, “Regulation of Ryukyu vessels” Feb. 27, 1952, in Ibid.

**Figure 1.** Japan's Territory in an unofficial map of 1951.<sup>76</sup>



The ambiguity of the Ryukyus' status is shown in Figure 1. This map was published in the front page of the Nippon Times in a special edition about the Peace Treaty in September 22, 1951. The Ryukyu Islands were left in the zone of Japan's pre-war empire together with former mandate islands and Taiwan. Therefore, Okinawa was not considered to be under Japan's sovereignty.

On the other hand, the fact that their international status was ambiguous (even before SFPT) produced some unusual situations and debates. There were a few questions that needed to be referred to the American legal process due to their complexity. For instance, in *Cobb v. United States* (1951), the appellant, a U.S. citizen employed by a contractor engaged in military construction had a car accident when he collided with an unlighted crane parked on the road after dark in Okinawa. The accident allegedly resulted from the negligence of an unknown employee of the U.S. in charge of

<sup>76</sup> Nippon Times, "Peace Treaty Supplement," Sept. 25, 1951.



that crane. The problem was whether or not Okinawa was considered to be a foreign country and whether the federal government could be sued for a tort that happened on Okinawa since it was under the U.S. control. In order to define the nature of Okinawa as a foreign state it was necessary first to clarify where its sovereignty lay. “The ultimate fate of Okinawa has not been decided. It cannot be said that the loss of ‘sovereignty’ over the island by Japan vests the ‘de jure sovereignty,’ in the traditional sense, in the natives of Okinawa” but since “the will of the U.S. is in fact the ‘supreme will’ on Okinawa. The United States has therefore acquired, and still retains, what may be termed a ‘de facto sovereignty.’” This case shows the legal complications of the situation of Okinawa even before the SFPT. In the end the judge needed to admit that the test of sovereignty when applied to the status of Okinawa, admits of no conclusive answer.<sup>77</sup>

However, since the article 3 of the SFPT was a slight adjustment of the ‘de facto’ situation in the Ryukyu Islands, the term *Residual Sovereignty* complicated more the definition of Okinawa’s international legal status. For example, in the 1954 case of the *United States v. Ushi Shiroma*, Ushi -an Okinawan born man living in the U.S.- was charged with failure as an alien to notify the Attorney General in writing of his current address as required by the law. Ushi Shiroma in his defense said that since he was a native Okinawa, and Okinawa was a possession of the U.S. he was not an alien but a national of the United States.<sup>78</sup> The problem was again to define where the sovereignty of Okinawa resided, and in particular the practical aspects of residual sovereignty. The Court concluded that “Japan, and not the United States, having ‘de jure sovereignty’ over Okinawa since the ratification of the Treaty of Peace, the defendant is not a

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<sup>77</sup> *Cobb v. United States* in [http://ftp.resource.org/courts.gov/c/F2/191/191.F2d.604.12746\\_1.html](http://ftp.resource.org/courts.gov/c/F2/191/191.F2d.604.12746_1.html) visited on April 10, 2010.

<sup>78</sup> The case’s description can be found in Marjorie M. Whiteman, *Digest of International Law*, vol. 1 (Department of State Publication 7403, 1963). pp 268 – 271.

national of the United States”.<sup>79</sup> In this sense, the residual sovereignty concept was explained by the Office of the Legal Adviser of the Department of State in 1959 in this way: “This phrase [residual sovereignty] expresses the idea that, far from being a cession of sovereignty, Article 3 of the Peace Treaty contains provision only for the broad exercise of the rights and powers of sovereignty by the United States. Thus, the United States has not annexed the islands or claimed sovereignty over them; sovereignty remains in Japan –even though in a latent or residual form. But the right to exercise the rights and powers usually associated with sovereignty has been given to the United States”.<sup>80</sup>

In sum, the American occupation of Okinawa and the SFPT divided the sovereignty over the Ryukyu Islands and thus confused the way that the Okinawans saw themselves and how the American considered Okinawa.

### 1.3. Chapter Conclusions.

The study of the international position of the Ryukyu Islands sheds light on various issues, particularly on the geopolitical context in Northeast Asia. In this regard, the main conclusions to be drawn are:

The post-war situation of Okinawa remained unclear largely due to the vague wartime agreements that did not specify the status of the island as part of defeated Japan.

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid. P.269.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid. p.270. Another example of how troublesome was the new status of Okinawa can be found in the concrete application of the Nationality law of Japan. Japan had changed after the war its nationality law, but since Okinawa had the same pre war laws, several irregular situations occurred. For example in the Ryukyu Island the foreign spouse of an Okinawan person was entitled to the Japanese citizenship but not in Japan, thus he/she was entitled to a false nationality. Also since in the new Nationality Law all nationals were required to have a domicile in Japan and the Ryukyu was not part of Japan according to the law (article 4 and 2(4)), a child born in the Ryukyu was not regarded as a child born in Japan. For a discussion on the issue see Saburo Kuwada, "Status of Okinawans under the Japanese Nationality Law," *The Japanese Annual of International Law*, no. 3 (1959).

This situation was used by the U.S. in its own benefits so that they could control the islands and built an American fortification in the Pacific.

In order to satisfy the demands of all interested parties, J.F. Dulles in the article 3th of the SFPT authored a formula that used the U.N. Trusteeship System as bait for other nations so that the Peace Treaty could be signed and ratified without further discussion about the status of Okinawa. The resultant Residual Sovereignty concept created an even bigger confusion about the international legal status of Okinawa since the sovereignty over the island was divided.

Finally, as a vital piece of the U.S. chain of defense in the Pacific, Okinawa re-attained its geopolitical importance in Asia. The ambiguous international status of the islanders can be seen as a strategy to perpetuate U.S. control over the islands and the first steps for more radical measures. In these conditions, the U.S. military could exert power in the Ryukyu Islands without responding either the Japanese government nor to the United Nations. Consequently, U.S. strategic priorities were above Okinawan people's needs, and sometimes were carried damaging people's lives.

## CHAPTER 2

### Explaining Emigration in Cold War Okinawa.

In August 1954 the first group of Okinawan immigrants arrived in Santa Cruz, Bolivia. They were the first couple of hundred people to migrate in a scheme that in almost ten years sent over three thousand people to Bolivia.<sup>81</sup> The U.S. government, through the United States Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands (USCAR) and other agencies, together with the Government of the Ryukyu Islands (GRI) and the Bolivian government organized the selection process for migrating to Bolivia, funds to cover the expenses of migration, free land in the hosting country, and so forth. The purpose of this program was announced as a solution to the population problem in the Ryukyu Islands; it aimed to send over ten thousand people to Bolivia, a small number if compared to other migration movement that happened in the world by the same time but promoted as crucial to give Okinawans the opportunity of a better future.<sup>82</sup>

The number of people who actually migrated to Bolivia fell short to what the USCAR authorities estimated necessary to face the serious population problem in the islands and also the destination chosen was less than an ideal prospect of opportunities to improve the social condition of the immigrants. Therefore, I consider necessary to look again and analyse the rationale behind the U.S. sponsored emigration of Okinawans to Bolivia.

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<sup>81</sup> Toshio Yanaguida and María Dolores Rodríguez del Alisal, *Japoneses En América* (Madrid: Mapfre, 1992). pp. 249-252.

<sup>82</sup> The Council of the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration, supported by the U.S. government, had planned to send over 1,7 million European migrant to other continents (chiefly to the Americas and Oceania) in a five years plan. George L. Warren, "Problems of Financing European Migration," *The Department of State Bulletin* XXXIII, no. 843 (1955). pp. 308-311.

From a theoretical point of view, the Okinawan migration to Bolivia partially fits the patterns of labour/social migration.<sup>83</sup> The difficult internal conditions in the stateless post-war Ryukyu Islands were characterized by a) the rapid increase of the population, b) the reduction of arable land, and c) lack of opportunities to prosper. These drove thousands of people to consider migration as an alternative.<sup>84</sup> Actually, Okinawa had a history of emigration, particularly since the Japanese annexation in 1879. Destinations included other parts of Asia, Micronesia and Latin America among others. However, during the first years of the American occupation (1945-1953), only those who were invited by their relatives already living in Latin America or elsewhere could apply to leave the islands.<sup>85</sup> For the rest of the population, migration was initially not an option in occupied post-war Okinawa. Nonetheless, social and economic circumstances do not explain the whole process of postwar migration.

The complexity of the international position of the Ryukyu Islands within the context of increasing tension between the U.S. and the growing power of the USSR in the 1950s must be taken in account in order to explain the Okinawan migration to Bolivia. In this sense, the Hegemonic Stability Theory (HST) can be useful. The HST - developed by Charles Kindleberger and Stephen Krasner among others- states basically that a hegemonic distribution of power (defined as one in which a single state has a predominance of power) is most conducive to the establishment of a stable, open international economic system.<sup>86</sup> Consequently, the hegemon must perform certain

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<sup>83</sup> Robert K. Arakaki, "Theorizing on the Okinawa Diaspora," in *Okinawa Diaspora*, ed. Ronald Y. Nakasone (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2002). p. 31

<sup>84</sup> Following the classic Ravenstein model of migration, the internal situation in Okinawa "pushed" people to migrate. See E. G. Ravenstein, "The Laws of Migration," *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society* 52, no. 2 (1889). and Felipe Cuamea, "Approaches to the Study of International Migration: A Review," in *Estudios Fronterizos* (2000)..

<sup>85</sup> The called emigrants were only a few hundred people. For a general background of the early Okinawa Migration see Ronald Nakasone, "An Impossible Possibility," in *Okinawan Diaspora*, ed. Ronald Nakasone (Honolulu: University of Hawaii press, 2002)..

<sup>86</sup> Webb and Krasner, "Hegemonic Stability Theory: An Empirical Assessment."

functions within this system such as take the lead in organizing trade liberalism, manage the international monetary system, supplying the international currency, and so forth.<sup>87</sup> The United States was the hegemonic power after the World War II until the emergence of other economies such as Japanese, German or the Soviet in the 1960s and 1970s. As James F. Hollifield assessed, this particular theory of international relations can be applied to explain migration.<sup>88</sup> Hollifield states that the challenge for states in the post-war period was to find a way to construct a new world order to promote their national interests that were tied closely to international trade and investment. Thus, the American "hegemonic stability" solved the problem during the first two decades.<sup>89</sup> For Hollifield, the liberal order was linked to the interest of the dominant power and following this reasoning, we could expect that certain rules governing the movement of people to reflect the interest of the dominant state.<sup>90</sup> Even more, I argue that in the case of the Okinawan migration to Bolivia, the U.S. as hegemon used migration as a "security" policy to reduce possible social conflict, to protect their keystone of the liberal world's defence in the Pacific.<sup>91</sup>

In this chapter I will analyse both sides of the coin. First, the social elements that encourage people to migrate and also the U.S. interest in promoting migration. The migration movement to Bolivia was in first place the consequence of the pitiable

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Hollifield, "The Politics of International Migration: How Can We "Bring the State Back In"?." pp.137-142..

<sup>89</sup> In the liberal institutionalism trend of the international relations, the international political economy incorporates economic and political analysis.Ibid. p.155.

<sup>90</sup> Hollifield, "Migration and International Relations: Cooperation and Control in the European Community."

<sup>91</sup> Also it has been proved that there is a positive relation between migration and markets, thus the migration to Bolivia could help to increase the exchange of goods between both territories. However, it cannot be consider as part of the rationale for this specific movement since in the 1950s still there were not enough evidence about this relation. Gustavo Javier Canavire Bacarreza and Laura Ruud, "The Impact of Migration on Foreign Trade in Bolivia," in *Migrants and Markets : Perspectives from Economics and the Other Social Sciences*, ed. Holger Kolb and Henrik Egbert, *Imiscoe Research* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008).

conditions in the island and also, a measure promoted with the purpose of protecting the political stability of Okinawa (and thus the liberal world) and supporting a friendly American country.

## 2.1. Okinawan migration as labour Diaspora.

The years of the U.S. administration constitute a major chapter in the “tragedy of the Okinawan History” as Ota Masahide has named it.<sup>92</sup> In this respect, the major consequence of Article 3 of the San Francisco Peace Treaty and the Dulles’s residual sovereignty theory was that the U.S. government in the Ryukyu Island could exert the power in the ways that they consider necessary without responding to either the Japanese government nor to the United Nations. This had repercussions for the administration of civilians which were detrimental to the local population.<sup>93</sup> The tragedy to which Ota refers was the worsening of the social, political and economical conditions of the Okinawa people; particularly overpopulation, lack of land, and poor administration.

The U.S. administration in Okinawa identified the rapid increase of the population as the most serious social problem in the islands. The population problem was already evident in the late 1940s, and in the 1950s it became even more serious (Table 1).<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Koji Taira, "The Ota Testimony: Okinawa's Declaration of Independence?," *The Ryukyuanist*, no. 36 (1997). p. 2

<sup>93</sup> It was amply recognized by U.S. authorities that the U.S. position in the Ryukyu Islands had as its foremost objective to protect the security defence line in the Pacific. This objective was put over the proper administration of the territories and its inhabitants. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1949*. pp.730-736

<sup>94</sup> In June 1946 40% of the total population was between 1 and 15 years old (in the U.S. was 27% ) by November, over 95,000 people had been repatriated and the birth rate exponentially increased Daniel D. Karasik, "Okinawa a Problem in Administration and Reconstruction," *The Far Easter Quarterly: Review of Easter Asia and the adjacent Pacific Islands* VII, no. 3 (1948). p.265

Table 1. Land Area, Population, and Population Density, by *gunto*.<sup>95</sup>

	Land Area	Population			Population Per Square Mile		
	Square Miles	1950	1955	1960	1950	1955	1960
Ryukyu Islands	847.9	698,827	801,065	883,122	824	945	1,042
Okinawa Gunto	544.4	580,223	678,017	759,341	1,066	1,245	1,395
(Okinawa Island)	(454.0)	(...)	(614,060)	(698,590)	(...)	(1,353)	(1,539)
Miyako Gunto	84.6	74,618	75,392	72,339	882	891	855
Yaeyama Gunto	218.9	43,986	47,656	51,442	201	218	235

As population pressure increased rapidly in Okinawa the U.S. authorities, without considering other plausible alternatives, chose emigration as the best solution for the demographic problem. Major General J.R. Sheetz, the Militar Governor of the Ryukyu Islands in a letter dated 13 February 1950 estimated that the total population since the end of the war has increased as much as 40%. As he explained "This growth represents the combined effect of a natural increase, and of repatriation of Ryukyuan from Japan and other areas of the Pacific."<sup>96</sup> In this period, a total of 172,688 persons have entered the islands, and only 9,196 persons have left the Ryukyus to go to other countries." So he suggested in his letter emigration as solution for this problem "The most practical means of alleviating the effects of population pressure in the Ryukyu

<sup>95</sup> USCAR, "The High Comissioner of the Ryukyu Islands: Facts Book," (San Francisco: 1965). p.5/13

<sup>96</sup> For repatriation see Naval Military Government Directive # 109 of January 29<sup>th</sup>, 1946.1950 - 1972 United States Civil Administration, *Laws and Regulations During the U.S. Administration of Okinawa: 1945-1972*, ed. Gekkan Okinawa Sha, vol. Book 3 (n/d). pp.191-193



would be through large-scale emigration of Ryukyuans to other countries".<sup>97</sup> He also acknowledged that the decrease of arable land as a result of U.S. military base construction was part of the causes of the problem, however for the USCAR it was easier to reduce the population than to curtail the extension of the airfields. Although emigration was the natural response to overpopulation, the extent of the baby boom required other means to control the population. As author E.G. Seidensticker stated in 1959 after a visit to the region: "In another few years the post war crop of babies will be flooding the labor market. Emigration cannot be relied upon to reduce the population, any more than it can in Japan".<sup>98</sup> Indeed, the problem went far beyond the scope of any emigrational program. In Japan the overpopulation problem was approached not only by promoting emigration but also by modifying the Eugenic law in 1948 making abortion practically legal and promoting birth control methods. The USCAR government was reluctant to favour such approaches and abortion remained a criminal offense.<sup>99</sup> According to Tigner, due to the population pressure, by 1951 the young generation of Ryukyuans considered emigration to be of extreme importance to their future welfare.<sup>100</sup> In sum, the increase of population and slow U.S. reaction to the problem worsened the social situation in Okinawa.

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<sup>97</sup> Yoko Sellek, "Migration and Nation-State: Structural Explanations for Emigration from Okinawa," in *Japan and Okinawa: Structure and Subjectivity*, ed. Glenn D. Hook and Richard Siddle (London: Routledge Curzon, 2003). p.83

<sup>98</sup> Seidensticker, "The View from Okinawa." p.42

<sup>99</sup> In Japan the Eugenic Protection Law of 1948 and subsequent revisions made abortion practically legal and easy obtainable in Japan by 1952. It should be noted that in Japan only doctors could judge when an abortion was recommendable and by making an abortion they increased their revenues. Therefore, the medical groups played a main role in promoting abortion in the Parliament. In contrast, in Okinawa the medical group did not play a similar role in the shaping of the health policies. Takuma Terao, "Outline of Birth Control Movement in Japan with Some Remarks on the Controversial Points," (Japan National Commission for UNESCO, 1959). And also in: Kozy Amemiya, "Reinventing Population Problem in Okinawa: Emigration as a Tool of American Occupation," in *JPRI Working Paper* (JPRI: Japan Policy Research Institute at the USF Center for the Pacific Rim, 2002).

<sup>100</sup> Tigner, "The Ryukyuans in Bolivia." p.219

Certainly the worsening of the social situation in Okinawa was not due exclusively to the increase of population. The decrease of arable land was a source of poverty and political tension within the islands. It was a source of poverty since three fourths of all U.S. military bases in Japan are located in the Ryukyu Islands (covering around twenty percent of the territory) and thus, reducing the food supply in Okinawa.<sup>101</sup> Prime Minister Kishi pointed this out in his visit to Washington: "The land problem is serious. The territory is small, and arable land is scarce. If land is taken for military use, even though payment is made, no other land can be obtained, because there is no other land".<sup>102</sup> Land that otherwise could have been utilized for agriculture, it was designated for airfields, military buildings, and later for accommodation and recreation of the growing American population.<sup>103</sup> It should be noted that process of land occupation was also a source of political tension and dispute. The land acquisition started during the war, and from 1950 it was conducted by the Service of the Army District Engineer, which had the power to purchase or lease property; since the price initially offered was too low the owners were reluctant to agree with the army's terms.<sup>104</sup>

In 1952, the recently formed GRI was made responsible for conducting the negotiations with the owners; however, the price offered was still below the owners' expectations. By 1953 the U.S. authorities had taken a more authoritarian position

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<sup>101</sup> Hook and Siddle, "Introduction." p.4. The American appropriation of land in Okinawa has been amply researched. For a summary of the process see Miyume Tanji, *Myth, Protest and Struggle in Okinawa*, ed. Glenn D. Hook, *Sheffield Centre for Japanese Studies/Routledge Series* (London: Routledge, 2006). and Higa, *Politics and Parties in Postwar Okinawa*. p.41

<sup>102</sup> Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955-1957*, vol. XXIII, (in two parts) Part 1, Japan. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1991). p.372

<sup>103</sup> Including civilians. See Donna Alvah, *Unofficial Ambassadors: American Military Families Overseas and the Cold War, 1946-1965* (New York: New York University Press, 2007). pp.167-197

<sup>104</sup> The price offered was the equivalent of thirty cans of Coca Cola for year.Tanji, *Myth, Protest and Struggle in Okinawa*. pp.60-64

which was highlighted by lump-sum rental payments.<sup>105</sup> In order to expand the U.S. military bases, the authorities forced the local population to rent their properties at a price set by the military.<sup>106</sup> Families unwilling to rent their lands were forced by the U.S. soldiers to accept a lump-sum payment and leave their land.<sup>107</sup> As an American Methodist missionary in Naha observed, the greatest problem was the lack of political sensibility from the U.S. authorities at the time of negotiating the price and re-appraising the value of the land. Consequently, for him "(...) today we are losing the respect of the people".<sup>108</sup> The American reaction to the land problem came as a report from Congressman Melvin Price who after his visit to Okinawa in 1956 concluded that "Our primary mission in the islands is strategic and this mission in the last analysis, and the military necessity which flows from the mission, must take precedence". He therefore supported the current payment system.<sup>109</sup>

Nevertheless, after massive demonstration against the U.S. and its policies in the archipelago, a new payment system was agreed upon and the prices were raised. To sum up, during the 1950s the land issue had significant social consequences that also help to explain the push for migration. Land acquisition for bases decreased the Okinawa's capacity to produce its own food (making it more dependant of the U.S. aid), and also it was a source a political conflict between the land owners and the American authorities. Together with the growth of the population, the lack of land in a mostly agrarian society encouraged people to look outside Okinawa for a better future.

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<sup>105</sup> C.A. Ordinance 91, C.A. Ordinance 109.

<sup>106</sup> Masterson and Funada-Classens, *The Japanese in Latin America*. p.138. Also in Hook and Siddle, "Introduction." pp.4-5.

<sup>107</sup> Most of the time in order to start building a new base, US soldiers needed to accompany the bulldozers to small farms and take out the farmers and their families. Tanji, *Myth, Protest and Struggle in Okinawa*. p.76.

<sup>108</sup> Otis W. Bell, "Play Fair with Okinawa!," *The Christian Century* LXXI, no. 3 (1954). p.76

<sup>109</sup> Helen Mears, "Our Blindspot in Asia," *The Progressive* 21, no. 7 (1957). p.16. By June 1956 Dulles considered the situation in terms of a group of farmers that did not want to lose their land, instead of the actual problem, a fair price for the lease. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955-1957*. p.180

A third element together with the population pressure and the land problem needs to be considered as a factor that propelled migration: the strong dissatisfaction towards the American administration. As Okinawan immigrants told Kozy Amemiya during her fieldtrip to Bolivia, they felt that in Okinawa they had been humiliated by the U.S. administration of the islands.<sup>110</sup> Moreover, 10% of the immigrants cited their dislike of living under United States occupation as the primary reason for their decision to emigrate.<sup>111</sup> The strong anti-American feeling reported amongst the local population was not due exclusively to issues of very difficult solution such as the increase of the population or the occupation of land for military purposes; rather, it was due to the poor performance of the U.S. civil administration in solving every-day problems and in acting with justice towards the population. Although U.S. propaganda promoted the idea that governors from the U.S. were better rulers than the pre-war Japanese prefectural authorities in terms of providing health and welfare services, supporting the Ryukyu farm families, and being able to change the face of “the Rock” with public works and reconstruction, the reality suggests many problems in the administration of the U.S. occupied Okinawa during the 1950s.<sup>112</sup>

Briefly, the U.S. administration – which never had a consolidated power structure until the end of the 1950s -<sup>113</sup> conducted the reconstruction process of the

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<sup>110</sup> Kozy Amemiya, "The Bolivian Connection: U.S. Bases and Okinawa Emigration," in *Okinawa: Cold War Island*, ed. Chalmers Johnson (Cardiff: Japan Policy Research Institute, 1999).

<sup>111</sup> Nakayama et al. 1986, cited in Taku Suzuki, *Embodying Belonging: Racializing Okinawa Diaspora in Bolivia and Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2010). p.30.

<sup>112</sup> For positive opinions about the work of the U.S. troops in Okinawa see The United States Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands, *The Ryukyu Islands: Prewar and Postwar (through 30 June 1958)* (n/d). p.9; Maj. Gen. David A.D. Ogden, "Keystone of the Pacific," *Army Informative* 9, no. 1 (1954). p.47; and Gladys Zabilka, *Customs and Culture of Okinawa* (Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1968 (1959)). p.16. For a study about Okinawa including the causes of Anti-American feelings see Conlon Associates Ltd., *United States Foreign Policy: Asia/Studies Prepared at the Request of the Committee on Foreign Relations United States Senate* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1959)..

<sup>113</sup> The power structure suffered many changes particularly in the 1940s with shifts from the Army to the Navy and then to the Army again, and in the 1950s, when in 1950s the U.S. military government was replaced by the USCAR with its head in Tokyo (Commander-in-Chief, Far East as Governor, and the

civilian sections of the islands very slowly, had in general a very poor economic performance, as well as being undemocratic and having a poor human rights record.<sup>114</sup> The reconstruction of the island ( a task entrusted to the “Public Service” office and after 1957 of the “Public Works” office) hardly advanced at all during the 1940s and only with the foundation of the USCAR (1950) and the increase of funds the reconstruction of the major cities and housing developments firmly started.<sup>115</sup> Naha was designed to be the capital city of the Ryukyu; however, between 1956 and 1959 in protest at the election of a pro-communist major in Naha, financial support to the city was cut off. Fourteen years after the end of the war the capital city was still under reconstruction.<sup>116</sup> Moreover, in the economic sphere, the Ryukyu Islands did not perform well at all.<sup>117</sup> Even though according to the U.S. sources there was almost no unemployment in the territory, (see Table 2) the country was submerged in poverty. By 1959, as Steve Rabson notes, the difference between Okinawa and the rest of Japan were strikingly noticeable: on one hand a buoyant mainland economy and on the other Okinawa was left in deep poverty.<sup>118</sup> Furthermore, as USCAR’s own statistical documents observed, by the end of the 1950s the diet of children was very poor in

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Commanding General, Ryukyu Command as Deputy Governor) and a “Civil Administrator” in Okinawa. In 1952, with the enforcement of the SFPT, Okinawa was no more an enemy territory so the locals could elect their own representatives in the new created GRI, which head was still appointed by the authorities in Tokyo. Later, the position of Deputy Governor changed its name in 1957 to High Commissioner (an aesthetic change only) and from 1962, the Civil Administrator began to be a civilian official. (Higa p23-24)

<sup>114</sup> A complete analysis of the U.S. administration of the Ryukyu can be found in Yoshida, *Democracy Betrayed: Okinawa under U.S. Occupation*. and Aurelia George Mulgan, "Managing the U.S. Base Issue in Okinawa: A Test," Working paper N° 2000/1 (Canberra: Working paper N° 2000/1, 2000).

<sup>115</sup> By 1959 128,000 houses were constructed financed mainly with U.S. funds. Mansel G. Blackford, *Pathways to the Present: Us Development and Its Consequences in the Pacific* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007). p.161.

<sup>116</sup> Ikeda Takayuki, "War Damage Reconstruction, City Planning and U.S. Civil Administration in Okinawa," in *Rebuilding Urban Japan after 1945*, ed. Carola Hein, Jeffry M. Diefendorf, and Ishida Yorifusa (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003). pp.131-144

<sup>117</sup> Historically the Ryukyu Islands have been an economic burden for their colonisers, since the resources in the islands are limited and trade hindered.

<sup>118</sup> Steve Rabson, "Memories of Okinawa: Life and Times in the Greater Osaka Diaspora," in *Islands of Discontent: Okinawa Response to Japanese and American Power*, ed. Laura Hein and Mark Selden (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, inc., 2003). p.104

Calcium (only 25% of the daily diet requirement), Vitamin A and B. Even more, in Miyako, people were reported eating poisonous plants as their last means to avoid starvation.<sup>119</sup> Monetary policy was erratic during the 1940s and 1950s and generated inflation.<sup>120</sup> Okinawa had three different currencies within eleven years: from the Japanese yen the U.S. authorities shifted to the Type B military Yen and later on to avoid a further depreciation of the military currency this was replaced by the U.S dollar in 1958 (see Table 3).<sup>121</sup> The trade balance exemplifies the situation in Okinawa: in 1959 they exported over twenty million dollars worth of goods but imported one hundred and twelve million.<sup>122</sup>

Table 2. Labor Force Status of population by Period, Ryukyu Islands.<sup>123</sup>

	1 Dec 1950	1 Dec 1955	1 Dec 1957
Total Population	698,827	801,065	830,400
Labor Force	290,792	333,800	368,900
Employed	289,572	329,100	364,200
% of the Labor Force unemployed	0.4	1.4	1.3

<sup>119</sup> United States Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands, "Civil Affairs Activities in the Ryukyu Islands," ed. Office of Plans and Programs (1960). p.191

<sup>120</sup> To stop inflation the USCAR government established price control on main products. For price control documents see 1950 - 1972 United States Civil Administration, *Laws and Regulations During the U.S. Administration of Okinawa: 1945-1972.* , ed. Gekkan Okinawa Sha, vol. Book 4 (n/d).

<sup>121</sup> It is important to note that whereas in mainland Japan the SCAP tried to increase the exports by devaluating the Yen, in Okinawa the Type B Military Yen was more expensive than the yen in order to benefit the Japanese and American producers. Yoshida, *Democracy Betrayed: Okinawa under U.S. Occupation.* p.90

<sup>122</sup> United States Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands, "Civil Affairs Activities in the Ryukyu Islands." p.5

<sup>123</sup> The United States Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands, *The Ryukyu Islands: Prewar and Postwar (through 30 June 1958).*

Table 3. Official Exchange Rate.<sup>124</sup>

Period	Ryukyuan Legal Tender	Rate of Exchange per U.S. dollar.
1937-1946 (average)	Japanese Yen	Y. 3.4
April 1945- August 1947	Japanese Yen	Y. 10
Sep. 1945 –February 1947	Japanese Yen	Y. 15
March 1947 – April 1950	Type B Military Yen	YB 50
April 1950- September 1958	Type B Military Yen	YB 120
September 1958-1964	U.S. Dollars	Not applicable

In terms of labour rights, the U.S. administration did not do better. First there were huge difference in salary between American employees, Japanese employees and Filipino employees, with the local population being the cheapest labour.<sup>125</sup> Local employees working for the U.S. did not have the right to collective bargaining; and there was no minimum wage.<sup>126</sup> Finally, the failure of the U.S. government to address the people's necessities and to give them a fair treatment was worsened by the vision from some sectors within the U.S. officials that the Okinawans were backward. As general Hull mentioned to President Eisenhower, "the people of the Ryukyu not only did not understand democracy but were incompetent to run their own affairs".<sup>127</sup> The vision of Okinawan as something lower than the American was also spread by the "unofficial ambassadors" of the U.S., the service wives who considered the Okinawans

<sup>124</sup> USCAR, "The High Commissioner of the Ryukyu Islands: Facts Book." p.11/2

<sup>125</sup> The U.S. worked earned twelve times more than what Okinawan people made. Tanji, *Myth, Protest and Struggle in Okinawa*. p.78

<sup>126</sup> C.A. Ordinance #144, 1955. Yoshida, *Democracy Betrayed: Okinawa under U.S. Occupation*. pp.92-93. Also it was mandatory to obtain permission from USCAR to form unions and obtain recognition for the union executive. (USCAR Ordinance 145. ). For the absence of minimum wage The High Commissioner of the Ryukyu Islands, "Civil Affairs Activities in the Ryukyu Islands," (1960). p.166

<sup>127</sup> Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954*, vol. 14,(in two parts) Part 2 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1985). p.1608

as children and treated them as such.<sup>128</sup> In sum, the poor and undemocratic performance of the civil administrator of the Ryukyu Islands let the Okinawan people's frustration to grow, frustration that at the end of the day also propelled migration.

In conclusion, "the tragedy" of the Ryukyu Island represented in these three aspects -land, population and administration- affected the whole population and impoverished the lives of those repatriated after the war. It also meant the humiliation of the total of the population and what it was worse, since their international status was ambiguous, there was no hope of an improvement of the situation in the foreseeable future. The natural consequences of all these factors were poverty, frustration and resentment, elements that were depicted as the major reasons to emigrate by the Okinawan immigrants in Bolivia.<sup>129</sup>

## 2.2. The U.S. rationale for promoting migration.

After World War II, the U.S. used its strategic position in strategic terms, to maintain and protect a line of defence for the liberal order in the Pacific. Although in the 1940s and 1950s there was as yet no co-hegemonic nation in Asia, communism was seen as the ultimate threat for the economic international order. In this environment the Ryukyu Islands were christened as the "Keystone" of the liberal order's defence line in the Pacific. As Dean Acheson stated that Okinawa was part of a defensive perimeter which ran along the Aleutians to Japan and then went to the Ryukyu, Taiwan and the Philippines.<sup>130</sup> The strategic position of the Ryukyu and the immense military

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<sup>128</sup> Alvah, *Unofficial Ambassadors: American Military Families Overseas and the Cold War, 1946-1965*. p.168

<sup>129</sup> Amemiya, "The Bolivian Connection: U.S. Bases and Okinawa Emigration."

<sup>130</sup> Acheson, "Crisis in Asia -an Examination of the U.S. Policy." pp.111-118. Also Secretary Dulles asserted before the Los Angeles World Affairs Council: "Today, the vast Pacific is a friendly ocean only because the West Pacific islands and two peninsular positions are in friendly hands. Thus, the United States itself holds Okinawa, Guam and other islands." John Foster Dulles, "Security in the Pacific," *The Department of State Bulletin* XXX, no. 783 (1954).



investment that the U.S. had made, transformed Okinawa into the main link in the chain of the Pacific defence. I will argue that the rationale behind the promotion of emigration to Bolivia or elsewhere was to protect general U.S. interest in the Ryukyu Islands.

In January 1957, Secretary of State Dulles explained to his counterpart in Defense, Charles E. Wilson, the danger of a politically instable Okinawa for the U.S. plans in the region:

“It is evident, of course, that a favourable local climate is essential to achieve United States objectives in the Ryukyus since hostility of the local population would largely negate the utility of military bases.(...) [I am] convinced that we have entered a new stage in the administration of the Ryukyu Islands where it is necessary to make modifications or else incur a growing hostility that may endanger our diplomatic and military position in the Far East”<sup>131</sup>

In other words, the role of Okinawa for the global plan of the United States was so important that they could not afford a major social uprising in the island. In this section I will analyse the nature of the relationship between Okinawans and Americans so as to draw a clearer picture of the threat for the diplomatic and military U.S.’ position in the Ryukyu Islands.

#### 2.2.1. Political stability and Communism in Okinawa.

The position of the United States in Okinawa was, from the earliest years of the occupation, opposed by most sectors of the population including leftists and pro-communist groups. Among the reasons for rejecting the USCAR we can mention the paradox of training people for democracy while at the same time maintaining them under a tight foreign military rule, the poor performance as administrators and on the

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<sup>131</sup> Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955-1957*. pp.244-245

top of that, the fact that the islands were severed indefinitely from Japan leaving Okinawa in an ambiguous international position.<sup>132</sup> Therefore the U.S. position in Okinawa was perceived by the U.S. authorities to be threatened by political and social forces within the Ryukyu Islands.

In first place, political parties, landowners, the School Teachers Union and workers participated in anti-American and reversion movement rallies.<sup>133</sup> Political parties provided a political platform for civilian and social leaders to express their dissatisfaction towards the occupation. As early as 1949 the main political parties in Okinawa formed a “Popular Front” to oppose the military government economic policy, and for the 1952 legislative election all parties had in their platform the goal of reversion to Japan.<sup>134</sup>

In fact, the American authorities recognized that an increase of social tension in Okinawa could give an opportunity to left wing political parties to obtain extra votes not only in Okinawa but in Japan proper as well. For instance, after Melvin Price’s report (which recommended lump-sums payment against the landowners’ wishes) was made public, the socialists gained more popular support in all the country making them to perform well in the July’s election.<sup>135</sup> Kono Ichiro, a senior Japanese official, complained to Ambassador Allison about the publication of the Price report. The problems generated by the report required the Department of State to make an

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<sup>132</sup> All these elements were also the basis for the Reversion Movement, which had as its objective the return of Okinawa to Japanese administration.

<sup>133</sup> According to Miyume Tanji the school teachers union was a central force that led the campaign for reversion. Tanji, *Myth, Protest and Struggle in Okinawa*. p.56

<sup>134</sup> The main parties by 1952 were the Okinawan People’s Part (Okinawa Jiminto) led by pro-communist Senaga Kamejiro; the Okinawa Socialist Masses Party (Okinawa Shakai Taishuto); Ryukyu Democratic Party (Ryukyu Minshuto). Initially some political parties celebrated the independence from Japan, however from 1952 on all political sectors concurred with the goal of reversion. Higa, *Politics and Parties in Postwar Okinawa*. p.29, 31 Tanji, *Myth, Protest and Struggle in Okinawa*. pp.55-56

<sup>135</sup> Kono Ichiro, a high Japanese official, complained to Allison about making public the Price’s report since for him it was the main cause of the socialist performance. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955-1957*. p.190-192

announcement and reject claims of U.S. expansionism.<sup>136</sup> The U.S. authorities, particularly in the Department of State, were very concerned with the political consequences of any misstep in Okinawa, to the point of recommending not to introduce the dollar currency in the Ryukyu (which had clear economic benefits and advantages from an administrative viewpoint) to avoid further conflict with the political and social movements.<sup>137</sup> From this perspective Kozy Amemiya's presumption that the USCAR encouraged migrations to Bolivia before the end of the base construction plan in 1955 so to avoid massive popular unemployment turmoil is plausible.<sup>138</sup>

Together with the political parties, landowners, workers and school teacher unions, other social actors in Okinawa and abroad opposed the U.S. role in the Ryukyu Islands. In Okinawa, students and intellectuals also resisted the American rule through what Michael Molasky has called "Occupation Literature", a genre that participated in both the construction and preservation of the society memory of the era.<sup>139</sup> Authors like Oshiro Tatsuhiro and Arakawa Akira in a context of severe restrictions on the publication of material, opposed the U.S rule.<sup>140</sup> Amongst the university students there were leftist groups that actively opposed the U.S. administration of the Ryukyus. For instance in 1953, the American authorities denounced university students who produced a pamphlet called "Liberty" which according to Gen. James M. Lewis, Civil

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<sup>136</sup> Ibid. pp.182-183

<sup>137</sup> In this particular case, the main issue was not to provide ammunition to the Socialist and Communist. Ibid. p.436

<sup>138</sup> Amemiya, "Reinventing Population Problem in Okinawa: Emigration as a Tool of American Occupation."

<sup>139</sup> Michael S. Molasky, *The American Occupation of Japan and Okinawa: Literature and Memory* (London: Routledge, 1999). p.2

<sup>140</sup> For example Arakawa Akira poem of 1956 "the Colored Race" accused the ethnical discrimination towards the Okinawa population. Ibid. p.94 Cf. Davinder L. Bhowmik, *Writing Okinawa: Narrative Acts of Identity and Resistance*, ed. Mark Selden, *Routledge Studies in Asia's Transformation* (New York: Routledge, 2008). pp.89-123

Administrator, “contains some of the most vitriolic and vituperative anti-American propaganda known to have been printed in the Ryukyus”.<sup>141</sup>

In addition, religious authorities (including western Christians) played an important role in denouncing the unfairness committed by the USCAR authorities to the local population. Similarly, the religious authorities helped to create the image of Okinawa as an American colony.<sup>142</sup> Some of them published their criticism of American governance in American journals or magazines. The press in the U.S. was from early time reporting about the deficiency in the U.S. administration in the Ryukyu. Publications such as the *Christian Century*, *The Progressive*, *Harper’s Magazine*, *Life*, *Times* and the *New York Times* reported about situation in Okinawa. Despite the differences, all of them at one moment or another provided a platform of criticism towards the U.S. administration in the islands.<sup>143</sup> For example, in numerous columns Robert Trumbull of the *New York Times* expressed strong criticism towards the lack of experience of the USCAR authorities and even more, criticised the U.S. failure to create a potential American showcase of democracy.<sup>144</sup>

Moreover, in a U.S. Senate requested report which was widely disseminated amongst pro-reversion groups, Robert A. Scalapino suggested that “the only realistic policy is that of accepting the fact of the gradual and ultimate reversion of Okinawa to Japan, and developing plans now to take account of the timing and adjustment needed to

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<sup>141</sup> The case of the “Liberty” ended with four students expelled. “Report of Government and Political Developments – May 1953” Jun 4, 1953. NA RG.260.B190.2/1.ex.2169.FRCs603. Folder 14.1.

<sup>142</sup> William W. Hunt III, *Christian, Buddhist and Confucian Protests against Military Bases in Okinawa: A Study of Seven Religious Leaders* (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2008). pp.61-76

<sup>143</sup> Time, “Okinawa: Unskilled Labor,” in *Time.com* (1958).; Mears, “Our Blindspot in Asia.”; Bell, “Play Fair with Okinawa!.”; Barton M. Biggs, “The Outraged Okinawans ” *Harper’s Magazine* 1958.

<sup>144</sup> Robert Trumbull, “Okinawa: “Sometimes Painful” Lesson for Us,” *New York Times*, April 7 1957.

insure long-range American interest".<sup>145</sup> In Washington, the authorities realized the threat that an internationalization of the American failure could mean. As John Foster Dulles, referring to the impact of the Price Report and potential support for the "reversion cause" from the USSR or other Asian countries could have in the international arena, stated: "the spectacle of Communist or Asian agitation and support for an international inquiry into the 'colonial' administration of the islands must be viewed as a definite likelihood".<sup>146</sup> In sum, the criticism expressed by intellectuals, religious leaders and American journalists was also considered a problem since it promoted the image of Okinawa as an American colony where American democracy had failed.

Finally, the ultimate menace for the U.S. global interest deposited in Okinawa, was the gradually penetration of left wing groups in the islands. Marxism and Communism were the main contestants to U.S. hegemonic liberal power in the Pacific and they were recognised as such. However, the Americans were not afraid that pro-communist agents could take over Okinawa by force (something unthinkable considering the U.S. military strength on the island). Political means were another matter. As Everett Drumright of the State Department noticed "(...) the Communists have acquired considerable proficiency in gaining their ends by political methods".<sup>147</sup> The lack of political stability in the Ryukyu Islands could, according to U.S. authorities, lead to communism and revolt against the Americans.<sup>148</sup> As James L. Tigner (advisor of the USCAR) and Paul H. Skuse, Chief of the Public Safety Division of the USCAR

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<sup>145</sup> This report was one of four requested by the Senate and the only one that suggested reversion. See Conlon Associates Ltd., *United States Foreign Policy: Asia/Studies Prepared at the Request of the Committee on Foreign Relations United States Senate*. p.11

<sup>146</sup> Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955-1957*. p.245.

<sup>147</sup> Everett Drumright, "Problems in the Far East," *The Department of State Bulletin* XXXI, no. 799 (1954). p.572. For the State Department position towards the Communist threat in the Far East see Howard J. Jones, "United States Policy in the Far East," *The Department of State Bulletin* XXXVII, no. 961 (1957). pp.840-845.

<sup>148</sup> Sellek, "Migration and Nation-State: Structural Explanations for Emigration from Okinawa." p.83

(branch in charge of immigration) concluded in their report about the situation in the Ryukyu Islands:

“The Okinawan people are traditionally farmers and ownership of the land is one of their most cherished desires in life. Okinawa, with its rising population and decreasing areas of available land, will offer progressively less future for the farming population. Restiveness and dissatisfaction will inevitably accompany the waning prospects of land ownership and fading hopes for an adequate livelihood, particularly among the youth of Okinawa. Since Communists appeal to the youth of a nation, and with apparent success in many areas of the Communist-dominated world, the youth of Okinawa represents a potentially vulnerable element of the population”.<sup>149</sup>

The communist threat was perceived as something that could at any moment complicate the U.S. position in the Ryukyu. From the establishment of the Government of the Ryukyu Islands and the establishment of independent legislative, executive and judicial organs, the political activity in the islands increased.<sup>150</sup> This made it possible that left wings parties such as the Okinawa Socialist Masses Party and particularly the Okinawa People’s Party (OPP) could lead the opposition to the United States. Although the OPP, led by Senaga Kemejiro, was accused on many occasions by the U.S. military authorities of being a communist party, Senaga was prompt to deny it. However, according to the intelligence reports, in the rallies organised by the OPP “a morale boost was given by the singing of such songs as the “Internationale”, “Hear, You Workers of All Nations”, “Song for Guarding World Peace” (...)” songs identified with the

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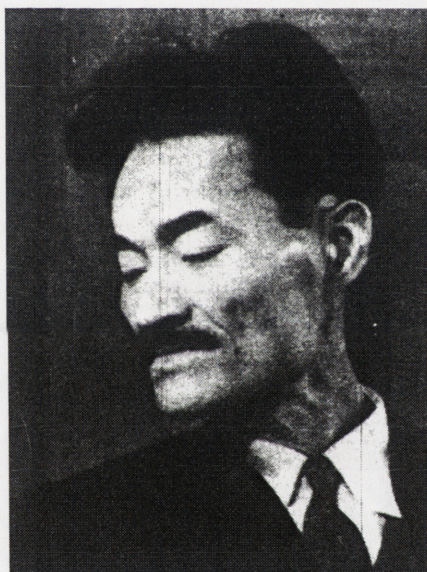
<sup>149</sup> “Memorandum: Ryukyu Emigration – South America” September 20, 1952. NA RG.319.270.18. ex.60 box30. I will develop Tigner’s role in the Ryukyuan Emigration Program in chapter 3.

<sup>150</sup> Higa, *Politics and Parties in Postwar Okinawa*. pp.27-31. Also see “Political Parties”, M.G. Special Proclamation N° 23, October 5, 1947.



communist tradition.<sup>151</sup> Also, the role of the OPP and Senaga needs to be understood within the syllogism of the Cold War: to act like a communist was to be a communist, and to be a communist was to be an instrument of international Soviet aggression. In this regard, it was not a surprise that a few years later the USCAR needed to change by decree the democratic rules governing municipal elections in order to dismiss Senaga as Naha's Mayor.<sup>152</sup> The U.S. authority felt threatened enough by the possibility that a leftist could have a position of power to blatantly go against the democratic values that they professed.

**Figure 2.** Senaga Kamejiro.<sup>153</sup>



Summing up, the role of the United States in Okinawa was strongly opposed by different social and political groups in the islands and in the United States. The U.S. authorities believed that a lack of political stability could endanger the strategic position of American's "Keystone in the Pacific". This could be utilized by leftist groups to further compromise the fragile American political position in the island. Consequently, social conflict in the island, as seen in Washington, could compromise the effectiveness

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<sup>151</sup> "Report of Government and Political Developments – May 1953" Jun 4, 1953. NA RG.260.B190.2/1.ex.2169.FRCs603. Folder 14.1.

<sup>152</sup> Tanji, *Myth, Protest and Struggle in Okinawa*. p.82.

<sup>153</sup> Trumbull, "Okinawa: "Sometimes Painful" Lesson for Us."



of the strategic role of Okinawa in the Pacific chain of defence. Thus, within this socio-political context is where we need to understand policies such as promotion of emigration.

### 2.2.2. The U.S. security policies to reduce social conflict.

The United States after the SFPT needed to deal with both the wish of the mainland Japanese to recover Okinawa and the protests of the civilian population in the Ryukyu. These problems were closely connected: what happened in Okinawa had a strong impact in mainland Japan in terms of news coverage and political consequences.<sup>154</sup> The reversion movement in Okinawa was the focus that gathered and expressed the frustration and anxiety of the Okinawan people in relation to the lack of opportunities in the islands and the authoritarian rule of the foreign occupation troops. On the other hand, the Japanese government, tied by the post-war treaties, tried feebly to change the situation in the Ryukyu Islands during the 1950s.<sup>155</sup> As Prime Minister Kishi said during his visit to Washington in 1957: “The problems of Okinawa are not simply those 800,000 Okinawans, but of 90,000,000 Japanese”.<sup>156</sup>

Nevertheless, the strategic position of Okinawa expressed in the NSC 13/3 and repeated in other official documents made extremely difficult for the American authorities to give any kind of concession about the sovereignty of the islands and the military role in the governance of the Okinawa.<sup>157</sup> Okinawa was the “Keystone” of the defence line in the Pacific, a strategic piece in the puzzle of American hegemony. However this position was not free of criticism within the U.S. Government. In

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<sup>154</sup> For the political impact see *supra* section 2.1.

<sup>155</sup> During the 1950s the Japanese government also tried to sign a peace treaty with the USSR and increase economic relations with the People’s Republic of China. The U.S. vetoed a Japanese treaty with the USSR and strongly discouraged relations with Communist China.

<sup>156</sup> Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955-1957*. pp.369-375

<sup>157</sup> *Supra* Chapter 1.



particular, the State Department recommended returning the Ryukyu Islands to Japan so as to avoid political criticism from Japan and elsewhere.<sup>158</sup> This posture was completely discarded in the State-Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) meeting in April 1952 when Ambassador Sebald, Secretary Acheson and Ambassador Murphy discussed the issue with the JCS. In that discussion the reasons for not releasing the Ryukyu from U.S. control were revealed when the in the JCS Gen. Vandenberg stated:

“(...) if we are going to wage atomic war, which might be unpopular with the Japanese, we would have to have a free hand. If we didn’t have a free hand we would lose 90 per cent of the value of the base”.<sup>159</sup>

So the position of the U.S. in the Ryukyu was at least during the 1950s unchangeable in terms of absolute control of the population in the base hosting islands. In case of war the U.S. military authorities considered it important to have absolute control over the land and the population. The military needed (as Gen. Vandenberg argued) a “free hand”. However there were still the problems of dealing with the Japanese government and the local population. In this regard, the approach of the U.S. was less to find a conclusive solution to problems but to patch them according to the situation. Migration, control of political parties and territorial concessions to the Japanese government were all policies meant to deal with the problem of the U.S. occupation of Okinawa.

In response to the Japanese government’s demands of sovereignty, the U.S. authorities decided during the Eisenhower administration to return the Amami island group (to the north of the Ryukyu archipelago) by the end of 1953.<sup>160</sup> This was a

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<sup>158</sup> Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954*. pp.1116-1120; p.1184

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.* pp.1224-1227.

<sup>160</sup> The Amami islands had been part of Kagoshima prefecture before the war; however, as part of the Ryukyu islands it was incorporated in the Art. 3 of the SFT.

political move to reduce tension with Japan and avoid further discussion about Okinawa. By returning the Amami group the U.S. did not lose much of its strategic position in the Pacific since most of the bases were located in the southern part of the Ryukyu Islands. As president Eisenhower mentioned himself, “To insist on controlling this little group of islands, which obviously meant a lot to Japan, amounted to risking the loss of our main objective, which was to assure ourselves of Japan’s friendship and loyalty over the long run”.<sup>161</sup> The “Christmas present” -as it was dubbed- was also the token in exchange for the Japanese silence about the U.S. control of Okinawa. The American authorities expected that after the return of the Amami the Japanese will not press for the return of control over Okinawa and the Bonin for a long time.<sup>162</sup> Finally, when the issue of the reversion of Okinawa to Japan was again raised in high level talks during the Kishi visit in 1957, the American once again rejected the idea. The U.S. could not renounce more strategic territory and fulfil at the same time their security duties.

The relationship between the U.S. officials and the population of the Ryukyu Islands was completely different to the one with the Japanese authorities. The reversion movement was not one that would allow gifts in exchange of peace, the local population demanded complete return of sovereignty to the Japanese. As the reversion movement, including the landowners and other social actors grew stronger, creating great social conflict and fanning strong anti-American feelings; the USCAR authorities saw a major influence of pro-communist elements and thus a threat to the control of the islands. In order to reduce social conflict in the Ryukyu Islands the U.S. authorities took a series of measures. Among them, the reversion movement and the Okinawa People’s Party were targeted from the early years of the decade and their leaders ended up spending time in

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<sup>161</sup> In the NSC meeting of June 25, 1953. Quoted in Robert D. Eldridge, *The Return of the Amami Islands: The Reversion Movement and U.S. - Japan Relations*, ed. Edward R. Beauchamp, *Studies of Modern Japan* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2004). p.97

<sup>162</sup> Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954*. pp.1481-1484

prison.<sup>163</sup> Also, in order to lower the participation in rallies or protests against U.S. politics in the islands, the American authorities organized events such as band concerts, drill teams and tank exhibits a few hundred metres from the demonstration site.<sup>164</sup> In addition, it was customary that the employees of military installations could lose their jobs if seen in such demonstrations.<sup>165</sup> The USCAR government tried to hinder all suspects of communism from running for elections. However, in the case that one leftist successfully attained a chief post in a municipality, the U.S. authorities went to the extreme of changing the rules to take him out of office (as happened in the case of Senaga in 1957).<sup>166</sup> Also, the USCAR government tried through emigration to soothe social tensions.

I would like to observe at this point that the rationale behind organizing and promoting migration was first and foremost utilitarian. In 1952 when early projects of migration were discussed, two were the common conclusions reached: first, Okinawa was suffering from population pressure and emigration would relieve this problem and lessen the U.S. government's economic support to the Okinawa population; and second, through emigration, the U.S. authorities could preserve the political stability in the islands and particularly, reduce anti-U.S. sentiments among the youth.<sup>167</sup> In the blueprint of the emigrational program, James Tigner stressed that "an emigrational program will give fresh hope to the youth and in this way serve to cope with their discontent and susceptibility to the communist's false promise of reward".<sup>168</sup> In this

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<sup>163</sup> Yoshida, *Democracy Betrayed: Okinawa under U.S. Occupation*. p.59

<sup>164</sup> These activities were organized for instance in the May Day of 1953. See "Report of Government and Political Developments – May 1953" Jun 4, 1953. NA RG.260.B190.2/1.ex.2169.FRCs603. Folder 14.1.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955-1957*. pp.544-546

<sup>167</sup> "Completion of SIRI Study of Ryukyuan Emigration Problem and Latin American Opportunities" November 15, 1952. NA RG.319.270.18. ex.60 box30. Also in "Memorandum: Ryukyu Emigration – South America" September 20, 1952. NA RG.319.270.18. ex.60 box30.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

sense, the emigration program cannot be considered to be only the solution to a demographic/economic problem but also a policy oriented to solve a political problem.

In the context of increasing anxiety in rulers and subjects (the former for reducing social tension and the latter for attaining a better life), the emigration plan was strongly supported in the U.S. as in Okinawa. After all, Okinawa was a country of immigrants where after the war around two hundred thousand people were repatriated from mainland Japan and other parts of the former Japanese empire. Also, the idea of promoting emigration was in line with the approach taken by the Japanese Authorities to deal with their own demographic problems so it would not have represented a diplomatic issue with the Japanese.<sup>169</sup> In the United States the idea received strong support from the congress, particularly by the work of Walter Judd, Chairman of the Subcommittee on the Far East and the Pacific.<sup>170</sup> Senator Judd –a former medical missionary in China and a supporter of McCarthyism-<sup>171</sup> considered migration a means to solve the problems related with overpopulation and the anti-American propaganda in the Ryukyus, America's "No 1 base out there".<sup>172</sup> He first introduced a bill (H.R. 10194) to provide an immigration quota for Okinawans to enter the U.S.<sup>173</sup> Also, Judd helped to include in the Mutual Security Act of 1954, an item securing US\$800,000 for funding the Ryukyuan Emigration Programs.<sup>174</sup> Finally, the idea was favourably received by the Okinawans. Due to the conditions that propelled migration discussed

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<sup>169</sup> Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954*. p.1785

<sup>170</sup> According to some authors, W. Judd played a leading role in shaping the foreign policy in the decade of 1950s. Lee Edwards, *Missionary of Freedom: The Life and Times of Walter Judd* (New York: Paragon House, 1990). p.203. For a political profile of the career of Walter H. Judd see Barbara Stühler, *Ten Men of Minnesota and American Foreign Policy, 1898 - 1968* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1973). pp.169-193.

<sup>171</sup> Judd supported the purge of leftists from the Department of State, although he did not supported the means used by Senator McCarthy. See Edwards, *Missionary of Freedom: The Life and Times of Walter Judd*.

<sup>172</sup> Foreign Affairs House of Representatives, *Mutual Security Act of 1956*, 84th Congress, 1956. p.312.

<sup>173</sup> The minimum quota was set in one hundred. "House of Representatives Bill 10194" August 9, 1954. NA RG.319.270.18. ex.60 box30.

<sup>174</sup> "Letter from Walter H. Judd to John A. Swezey" August 19, 1954. NA RG.319.270.18. ex.60 box30.

above, the Okinawan people embraced the idea of migrate as a solution to the difficulties found in the islands; thus, by the end of the decade, emigration was included in the political platform of some parties. For instance, the Okinawa Liberal Democratic Party in its political platform article “F”, defended a “vigorous promotion of the emigration program”; similarly, the Okinawa Socialist Masses Party also defended the promotion of emigration in its platform.<sup>175</sup> Moreover, the GRI’s Chief Executive Higa advocated migration not only to Latin America but also to the South Sea Islands, from where many Okinawan had been repatriated after the war.<sup>176</sup>

On this basis, in 1953 the US administration introduced a policy offering assistance to emigrants from the Ryukyus to Bolivia. The scheme attracted enormous interest in Okinawa. The first emigration ship left from the port of Naha in June 1954. By the end of that year over four hundred people had emigrated from the Ryukyus to Bolivia. The scheme continued until 1967 and included other destinations such as Brazil, the U.S., and Argentina sending in total 15475 people.<sup>177</sup>

### 2.3. Chapter Conclusions

This chapter argues that the Okinawa emigration program to Bolivia was un part a consequence of internal social/labour conditions that propelled people to leave their motherland. Nevertheless, such movement could have never been materialized unless the American authorities agreed to organize and promote it. In that sense, the U.S. policy on migration reflected the importance of Okinawa as keystone of the American defence in the Pacific and the role of the U.S. as guardian of the liberal world’s interests.

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<sup>175</sup> The High Commisioner of the Ryukyu Islands, "Civil Affairs Activities in the Ryukyu Islands." pp. 315-320

<sup>176</sup> "Petition for Emigration to the South Sea Islands of the Ryukyu Fishermen" March 17, 1953. NA RG.260.B190.2/1.ex.2169.FRCs603. Folder 14.1.

<sup>177</sup> Source in JICA, Okinawaken to kaigai ijuu (Tokyo: Jica 1982) pp, 98 – 99. Cited in Toake Endoh, *Exporting Japan: Politics of Emigration toward Latin America* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2009). p.164.

Overpopulation, the reversion movement, the growth of leftist groups and other anti-U.S. movements were considered a very serious threat to U.S. interests in the region so the American authorities acted by promoting various policies and among them, emigration.

Consequently, emigration was first thought of as a policy to improve security rather than a means for improving people's life. To understand the process that turned this aim into reality, however, we need to consider in detail how the migration scheme was initiated. This also involves an examination of the reasons why Bolivia was chosen as the destination for migration. What kind of connections made possible to link Bolivia and Okinawa. How was the choice of Bolivia as hosting country and the process of assisting the creation of the emigrant colonies in Latin America connected to U.S. policy. To understand this, we also need to examine role played the emigrants themselves in the global U.S. strategy.

## CHAPTER 3

### The Bolivian Connection

In June 10, 1953, the president of Bolivia Victor Paz Estenssoro signed the Supreme Resolution N. 57311 allocating 2, 500 hectares of land in the Department of Santa Cruz for the settlement of Ryukyuan emigrants.<sup>178</sup> This agreement was the result of the active participation of the local pre-war Okinawan colony in Bolivia and the United States government (through different agencies) and it had political repercussion in the political meaning of the emigrants once they left Okinawa.

In this chapter I will deal with two different sets of connections that made the Ryukyuan emigration program to Bolivia possible and convenient for the U.S. First, I will explore the reasons which explain the rationale behind choosing Bolivia as a hosting state for Ryukyuan immigration from the perspective of the U.S. – Bolivia relations. Then, I will analyse the connection between U.S. interests in Bolivia and those in Okinawa. Particularly I will analyse the role of Dr. James Tigner, the man who promoted and eloquently articulated the benefits of the Ryukyuan emigration to Latin America. Finally, I argue that the body of the immigrants came to represent and play a key role in global U.S. policies

As discussed in chapter 2, the idea of promoting emigration of thousands of Okinawan people was based in the strategic importance of the Ryukyu Islands as cornerstone of the U.S. military defence in the Pacific –which needed to be protected from social threats. Also, the Ryukyu emigration program can be explained by the hegemonic position that the U.S. had in the world in the 1950s which carried the

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<sup>178</sup>“Resolución Suprema No. 57311.”, Junio 18, 1953. NA RG.319.270.18. ex.60 box30.

responsibility to look after the global liberal system.<sup>179</sup> Therefore, the emigration program had more to do with the United States' geopolitics than with the socioeconomic conditions in the islands.<sup>180</sup> Now, if the Ryukyu emigration project was the result of the hegemonic position of the U.S., were the hosting states chosen following the same principle? That is to say that Bolivia was selected due to its strategic value for the U.S. policy and not necessarily for the emigrants' benefit.<sup>181</sup> In this chapter I will assess the political factors that made Bolivia the destiny for the first groups of Okinawan emigrants.

There are other levels of connections that made the emigration program plausible and are relevant in order to understand the Ryukyuan emigration to Bolivia. If the emigration program started in Bolivia was because there was a connection between the Bolivian Ryukyuan, people who emigrated from Okinawa during the emigration process prior the Second World War and the U.S. interest in Asia. In this regard I will analyse the role of Dr. James Tigner who 'connected' the local Bolivian-Okinawan community's plan for hosting emigrants and the USCAR's necessity for a solution to their problems in Okinawa.

The Okinawan emigrants also deserve special attention from a microphysical perspective. Their "bodies" were not only first line witnesses of global politics but also the subject of a specific discourse of power.<sup>182</sup> They were symbols of the U.S. military power in Okinawa and abroad. Therefore, even though they were leaving direct U.S.

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<sup>179</sup> See Webb and Krasner, "Hegemonic Stability Theory: An Empirical Assessment."

<sup>180</sup> Supra chapter 2.

<sup>181</sup> It should be noted that Bolivia vis-a-vis other potential hosting nations was the poorest, thus as Endoh suggests, promoting labour migration to a poorer country could be considered to be a paradox. Endoh, *Exporting Japan: Politics of Emigration toward Latin America*. pp163-164. , Also, in 1954, Bolivia's real GDP per capita was lower than in Japan proper. See Alan Heston, Robert Summers and Bettina Aten, Penn World Table Version 6.2, Center for International Comparisons of Production, Income and Prices at the University of Pennsylvania, September 2006. [http://pwt.econ.upenn.edu/php\\_site/pwt62/pwt62\\_retrieve.php](http://pwt.econ.upenn.edu/php_site/pwt62/pwt62_retrieve.php). Visited on 28-08-2009.

<sup>182</sup> Suzuki, *Embodying Belonging: Racializing Okinawa Diaspora in Bolivia and Japan*. p.8.



authority there was a microphysical link between the émigrés and the sender. The future of the emigrants was connected with the image of the U.S. as guarantor of stability. So the question here is how can we interpret the role of the Okinawan emigrants within the bigger international relations picture?

### 3.1. The U.S. – Bolivia connection.

The agreement signed by the Bolivian president in 1953 enabled the settlement of Okinawan immigrants in the region of Santa Cruz.<sup>183</sup> This agreement was the result of the active participation of the local pre-war Okinawan colony in Bolivia and the United States government (through different agencies). It also permitted the conducting of a ten year program with an original aim of bringing 3,000 Ryukyu families to Bolivia.<sup>184</sup> Bolivia was thus chosen by the U.S. authorities to be the first hosting nations of a mass migration project.<sup>185</sup> Since the American authorities had the capacity to direct the migration flow, I consider it valid to ask to what extent the choice of Bolivia as hosting country reflects the global U.S. policy.

The U.S. policy towards Latin America changed with the beginning of the Cold War and the fight against International Communism. The U.S. authorities, concerned with the spread of pro-Soviet groups in the hemisphere, started to support friendly governments in the region, mainly through aid and military assistance. In Bolivia, with the arrival of the Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario (MNR) to power in 1952, the U.S.-Bolivian relations were strengthened due to the commitment of the MNR

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<sup>183</sup> "Resolución Suprema No. 57311.", Junio 18, 1953. NA RG.319.270.18. ex.60 box30.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid.

<sup>185</sup> When I say that Bolivia was "chosen" by the U.S. as a recipient nation for Okinawans, I am appraising an international migration case from an international relation perspective. The nation's ability to control its own borders is the *sine qua non* of its own sovereignty; hence, sovereign states have the capacity to regulate migration flows. Hollifield, "The Politics of International Migration: How Can We "Bring the State Back In"?" pp.141-142.

government to combat communism and the aid and technical assistance given by the U.S.

Before 1952, U.S.–Bolivia relations were centred chiefly in the tin industry, Bolivia's main source of foreign currency. In the 1940s, Bolivia's tin industry was the second largest producer of tin in the world and the first not controlled by a colonial power.<sup>186</sup> Thus, during the world war Bolivia was a key hemispheric ally of the United States, providing tin and other minerals at a U.S. controlled price.<sup>187</sup> However, after the war, the international price for tin dropped and the U.S. was unwilling to continue buying at the same price as during the war, so negotiated a lower value. As the Andean nation's funds diminish, Bolivia –a country which imported most of its staple food– suffered famine. Consequently, Bolivia from the end of the war to 1952 without much funding found itself in a series of changes of governments and coup d'états.<sup>188</sup>

In 1952 a revolution put in power the MNR, a moderate leftist non-aligned party which was supported for a large spectrum of Bolivia's political forces. It was led by the democrat and anti-imperialist Victor Paz Estenssoro. Nevertheless, the U.S. authorities considered that the MNR was a key domestic force limiting the chances for the full development of a Communist movement.<sup>189</sup>

In the 1950s, Latin America became a more important strategic region in U.S. global policy. From a hegemonic stability perspective, the U.S. was responsible for the development of the markets in the region as well as for keeping the hemisphere free of communism. The Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs, John M. Cabot, stated

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<sup>186</sup> Kenneth D. Lehman, *Bolivia and the United States: A Limited Partnership* (London: The University of Georgia Press, 1999). p.62.

<sup>187</sup> Some authors have argued that Bolivia lost money not selling its minerals in open market. Ibid. pp.78-80.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid. p.95. Each family was considered to have four members, hence the agreement allowed the entrance of 12,000 people.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

clearly the aim of the U.S. relations with the hemisphere in 1953: "Practically everybody in the United States agrees on our policy objectives in this hemisphere. We want good relations with our sister Republics. We want to cooperate with them. We want peace and democracy and continental solidarity and due process of law and sovereign equality and mutual assistance against aggression".<sup>190</sup> It was particularly this last point, "assistance against aggression" which moved millions of dollars in military assistance to Latin America. As reported in The Department of State Bulletin in March 1953, the reasons for military assistance were articulated in Cold War rhetoric: "1. This hemisphere is threatened by Communist aggression from within and without; 2. The security of strategic areas in the hemisphere and of inter-American lines of communication is vital to the security of every American republic; and 3. The protection of these strategic areas and communications is a common responsibility".<sup>191</sup> The fight against communism was so fierce in the Americas that the U.S. government between 1951 and 1952 allocated around ninety million dollars for direct military assistance to Latin America.<sup>192</sup>

Although the U.S. had a general Latin America policy, Bolivia was treated in a special way. The collapse of the mining industry due to low international prices created great instability in the Andean country and increased the possibilities for a communist triumph. Secretary of State Dulles, in a letter to the director of the foreign operations administration Harold Stassen, explained why the situation in Bolivia could be dangerous for the security of the United States.

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<sup>190</sup> This is part of a speech given to encourage export managers to invest in Latin America. John M. Cabot, "U.S. Capital Investment in Latin America," *The Department of State Bulletin* XXVIII, no. 718 (1953). p.460.

<sup>191</sup> N/A, "Military Assistance to Latin America," *The Department of State Bulletin* XXVIII, no. 718 (1953). p.464.

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.* About half of the money that the Marshall Plan allocated for the Greek reconstruction and to fight Communist insurgency in the Balkans in 1948.

“(…) Bolivia faces economic chaos. Apart from humanitarian considerations, the United States cannot afford to take either of two risks inherent in such development: (a) the danger that Bolivia would become a focus of Communist infection in South America, and (b) the threat to the United States position in the Western Hemisphere which would be posed by the spectacle of United States indifference to the fate of another member of the inter-American community.”<sup>193</sup>

Bolivia in the early 1950s became the focus of the U.S. aid in South America and even though the MNR's Bolivia was not a sound pro-U.S. government, it ensured at least a pro-democratic and anti-communist position.<sup>194</sup> As John Cabot explained the U.S. aid in Bolivia: “if we believe in democracy, it is surely our duty to deal with regimes solidly based on the consent of the governed, even if they differ somewhat from us in their concepts of government (...) we have common interests vastly more important than our differences. We face alike the implacable challenge of communism”.<sup>195</sup> Of course, this change in the U.S. approach surprised the Bolivian government which, pressed by the strained economy of the nation, promptly accepted the U.S.' aid.<sup>196</sup> The initial aid for 1953 was 9 million dollars which helped to ease the critical situation in Bolivia.<sup>197</sup> Milton Eisenhower in his report on his trip to South America in 1954 stated: “The emergency aid extended Bolivia by this government has been of fundamental importance in easing the critical situation and preventing Bolivia's rapid descent into

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<sup>193</sup> Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954*, vol. 4. The American Republics (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1983). p.535.

<sup>194</sup> For an early analysis and bibliographic discussion of the MNR government see Charles W. Arnade, "Bolivia's Social Revolution, 1952 - 1959: A Discussion of Sources," *Journal of Inter-American Studies* 1, no. 3 (1959)..

<sup>195</sup> John M. Cabot, "Inter-American Cooperation and Hemisphere Solidarity," *The Department of State Bulletin* XXIX, no. 748 (1953).

<sup>196</sup> Guillermo Bedregal, Víctor Paz Estenssoro, *El Político: Una Semblanza Crítica* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1999). p.467.

<sup>197</sup> Although the aid for Bolivia was criticized in the U.S., Milton Eisenhower and the President supported it since “the aid was quite experiment in regional cold war hegemony”. Lehman, *Bolivia and the United States: A Limited Partnership*. p.112.

economic chaos with consequences that could have been favourable only to Communists...Our extension of aid to Bolivia had immediate success from the viewpoint of our political interests through the strengthening of moderate members of the government and by making it possible for them to take increasingly strong steps against Communist elements in the country.”<sup>198</sup>

Due to the critical shortage of foodstuff in Bolivia, the initial aid was used to import staples (mostly from the U.S.) and ease the famine. The Bolivian government, dependant now on the U.S. aid, initiated a program of agricultural development in order to cope with the internal demand of food.<sup>199</sup> By 1950s the agriculturally rich region of Santa Cruz was underpopulated so the Paz government in order to have more people working the land in the region encouraged internal migration from the highlands towards the east.<sup>200</sup> The potentialities of the region were recognized by the authorities in the U.S. and in Bolivia. Oscar M. Powell, country director of the U.S. Technical Assistance Program in Bolivia (also known as Point Four) concluded that efforts would be directed towards expanding agricultural production of Santa Cruz.<sup>201</sup> For instance, the U.S. government supported investment in developing the Santa Cruz region and constructed an all weather road to Santa Cruz.<sup>202</sup> However the internal migration was not as successful as planned since the people from the highlands were not willing to leave their ancestral lands. Then the Bolivian authorities, convinced that the number of

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<sup>198</sup> Confidential supplement to the Milton Eisenhower report (n.d) quoted in Ibid. pp.120-121.

<sup>199</sup> Bedregal, Víctor Paz Estenssoro, *El Político: Una Semblanza Crítica*. p.452.. For a legal commentary on the Agrarian Reform see Jesus de Galindez, "Decree-Law No. 3464 on Agrarian Reform," *The American Journal of Comparative Law* 3, no. 2 (1954).

<sup>200</sup> For a review of the internal migration in Bolivia see Allyn MacLean Stearman, *Camba and Kolla: Migration and Development in Santa Cruz, Bolivia* (Orlando: University Presses of Florida, 1985).

<sup>201</sup> Tigner, "The Ryukyans in Bolivia." p.221.

<sup>202</sup> Lehman, *Bolivia and the United States: A Limited Partnership*. p.117. The Harry Truman inaugural address in 1949 contained the famous Point Four Program, with the objective of "making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas". See Ravi Kanbur, "The Economics of International Aid," in *Working Paper Department of Applied Economics and Management* (Ithaca: Cornell University, 2003).

necessary migrants would not be accomplished by internal migration alone, opened the doors for international immigration to the region of Santa Cruz.<sup>203</sup>

From a Bolivian perspective, the Okinawa immigration plan had as its main objective to diversify the Bolivian economy and increase the production of foodstuff and other crops. Thus by promoting Ryukyuan emigration the U.S. government was also assisting the Andean economy. The agreement providing funds for Okinawan immigration signed by the Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Colonization Dr. Alcibíades Velardes C. and the acting Director of the United States of America Operations Missions to Bolivia Dr. Anthony Donovan stated: "The plan consists of a colonization scheme based on the immigration of Okinawans to carry out agricultural pursuits. The agricultural development of potentially rich areas which at present have a limited number of inhabitants is an imperative need in Bolivia, with the objective of diversifying the economy of the country by augmenting the production of foodstuff and other crops. One means of obtaining this increase in agricultural production is by aiding the immigration of groups which, because of their dedication to agricultural pursuits, can contribute to the healthy development of the potential agricultural and livestock resources of the country".<sup>204</sup> In other words, the Ryukyuan emigration plan fitted smoothly in the U.S. strategic purposes in Bolivia.

To sum up, the arrival of groups of immigrants to Bolivia (particularly from Okinawa) was due to the influence that the U.S. government had in Bolivia. Development policies were, as explained above, part of a hemispheric strategy to strengthen democratic governments and diminish Communist groups in the continent.

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<sup>203</sup> For a complete analysis of the colonisation in Eastern Bolivia see J. Valeri Fifer, "The Search for a Series of Small Successes: Frontiers of Settlement in Eastern Bolivia," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 14, no. 2 (1982).

<sup>204</sup> "Program of American Economic Assistance, project No. AE-C-5" April 1954. In NA RG.319.270.18. ex.60 box30.

Thus, the United States as hegemon of the liberal world, in order to ensure political stability and support regional markets, delivered large-scale military and financial aid as well as helping in a small scale to certain development projects such as agricultural international migration. Although the size and relative importance of the Okinawan immigration to Bolivia is small compared to other projects, it is an excellent example to understand the rationale behind the American assistance.

### 3.2. The “Tigner” connection.

James Hollifield suggests that international migration can be seen as the function of economic forces, rights, and networks.<sup>205</sup> In the case of the Okinawan migration to Bolivia we can observe these three elements given that: Bolivia promised land and thus a better economic life; in Okinawa, due to the U.S. occupation, people enjoy limited rights, so going to Bolivia was a way to escape from the pressure of U.S. occupation; and finally international migration is characterised by the existence of networks with the hosting country. Networks of immigrants increase the likelihood of international movement because they lower the costs and risks of movement.<sup>206</sup> The immigration to Bolivia was possible because there were active and “already-there” Okinawan groups. In this section I will analyse different connections that made the Ryukyuan emigration plan conceivable, particularly the role of Dr. James Tigner who connected the local Bolivian-Okinawan community’s immigration plan and the U.S. authorities’ necessity for a solution to their problems in Okinawa.

In the early 1950s the Pacific Science Board of the National Research Council, under the direction of Harold J. Coolidge, launched studies to facilitate the U.S.

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<sup>205</sup> Hollifield, "The Politics of International Migration: How Can We "Bring the State Back In"?" p.145.

<sup>206</sup> Massey et al., "Theories of International Migration: A Review and Appraisal." p.448.

occupation of Okinawa.<sup>207</sup> The Council at the explicit request of Brig. Gen. James M. Lewis, Civil Administrator of the Ryukyu Islands, included a survey of Ryukyuan immigration to South American countries with exploration of possibilities for resettlements or colonisation.<sup>208</sup> The Council in cooperation with the Hoover Institution of Stanford University and funds from the U.S. Department of the Army assigned James Tigner, a PhD candidate in Latin American history at Stanford University, to this mission.<sup>209</sup> Therefore, Tigner became the hinge between South America and the U.S. interests in Okinawa.

During the course of nine months, Tigner visited 12 Latin American countries finding Ryukyuan residents in six of them (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Mexico and Peru). However, in a memorandum to H.J. Coolidge in November 1952, Tigner considered: "the Santa Cruz region of Bolivia to be the most hopeful for Ryukyuan colonization in the immediate future".<sup>210</sup> The main reason for this appreciation was that whilst visiting Bolivia, Tigner met the local Okinawan community who had -even before knowing about Tigner's visit- started to design an immigration program in support of their countrymen.<sup>211</sup> On December 25, 1949, Gushi Kancho, the leader of the Okinawan group in Riberalta, proposed the idea of bringing Okinawans to Bolivia, and the following year, with the assistance of José Akamine from Santa Cruz, looked for available land suitable for new immigrants.<sup>212</sup> They found some privately owned land east of Rio Grande next to a large area owned by the central government (Figure 3).

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<sup>207</sup> Sellek, "Migration and Nation-State: Structural Explanations for Emigration from Okinawa." pp.83-84., Amemiya, "Reinventing Population Problem in Okinawa: Emigration as a Tool of American Occupation."

<sup>208</sup> Tigner, "The Ryukyuan in Bolivia." p.220.

<sup>209</sup> The project started in 1951 and ended in 1954. Ibid.

<sup>210</sup> "Memorandum", November 15, 1952. NA RG.319.270.18. ex.60 box30.

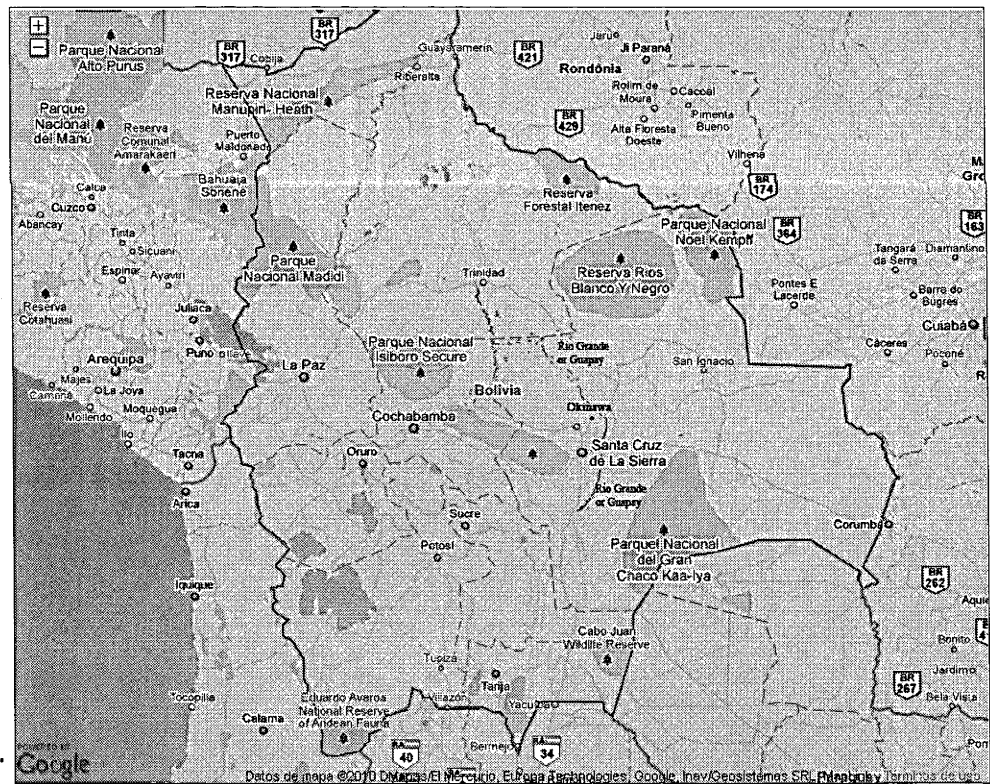
<sup>211</sup> This plan was designed as a possibility in the future to help their countrymen but had not institutional endorsement from the USCAR.

<sup>212</sup> The record of the activities of the Okinawan group in Bolivia comes from a three-volume handwritten journal kept in the Okinawan Association in Santa Cruz. A brief description is given in Amemiya, "Reinventing Population Problem in Okinawa: Emigration as a Tool of American Occupation."



Having in mind a potential land grant from the government, the exploration group bought some land and in 1951, the group established the “Uruma” Agricultural and Industrial Society, organization qualified to apply for land grants.<sup>213</sup> Therefore, when Tigner visited Bolivia in May 1952 there was already a basis for a large Okinawan immigration. What Tigner needed to do was first to help to organise a mass migration project and then persuade the U.S. authorities of the convenience of the idea.<sup>214</sup> As a result, Tigner first requested to the Uruma Society members to produce a more concrete project and then he started to pull as many strings as he could. The immigration project was ready just a few months later, and included the society’s accomplishments (including the 12,500 hectares purchased).<sup>215</sup>

Figure 3. Map of Bolivia.



<sup>213</sup> The Uruma Society began also contacts with the Okinawan Government and the Okinawa Overseas Association, Ibid..

<sup>214</sup> The Uruma Society’s project originally was conceived to bring 50 families only.

<sup>215</sup> “Plan of Colonization: Japanese (Okinawan) Immigration by the ‘Uruma’ Agricultural and Industrial Society” October 1952, NA RG.319.270.18. ex.60 box30.

After his tour in Latin America, Tigner moved swiftly. He went to Tokyo and spoke to the deputy Chief of the Japanese Emigration Section who educated him about the Japanese emigration-colonization program in Brazil.<sup>216</sup> A few days later Tigner went to Okinawa where he met General Lewis, Civil Administrator of the Ryukyu Islands, and made his initial proposal for emigration to Santa Cruz region in Bolivia which caught the interest of Gen. Lewis.<sup>217</sup> By the end of the week he briefed Gen. Lewis and other officials, including General Robert S. Beightler, Deputy Governor about the emigration plan. During his stay in Okinawa, Tigner also on several occasions met Higa Shuhei, Chief Executive of the Government of the Ryukyu Islands (GRI), other members of the GRI, staff members of the USCAR, and representatives of the Okinawa Overseas Association.<sup>218</sup> Prior to his departure from Okinawa, Gen. Lewis approved the plan and agreed to allocate \$160,000.- of USCAR funds for transportation of the first group. On his way back to California Tigner stopped for two days in Hawaii and had a meeting with members of the local Okinawan Association. Since most of the remittances reaching Okinawa come from Hawaii, Tigner considered necessary to obtain their support.<sup>219</sup> Even before the project was approved in a higher level, informal contacts were made with the Bolivian government authorities so that to allow the mass migration plan; Also, Tigner kept correspondence with Dr. Oscar M. Powell from the Point Four mission in Bolivia, who gave his opinions and recommendations to the program.<sup>220</sup> In brief, James Tigner provided the initial links among the interest of the local Bolivian-Okinawan, the U.S. authorities in Okinawa, and eventually the U.S. authorities in Bolivia. It should be noted that in my research I did not find strong evidence suggesting that the Uruma Society plan or Tigner's report were properly revised or criticised until the first group of immigrants arrived in Bolivia. Nevertheless, Tigner's

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<sup>216</sup> From this meeting Tigner realised that the Japanese could initiate contacts earlier with the Bolivian Government and hinder the Okinawan immigration.

<sup>217</sup> Tigner's letter to Dr. Harold J. Coolidge. October 7, 1952. NA RG.319.270.18. ex.60 box30.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid.

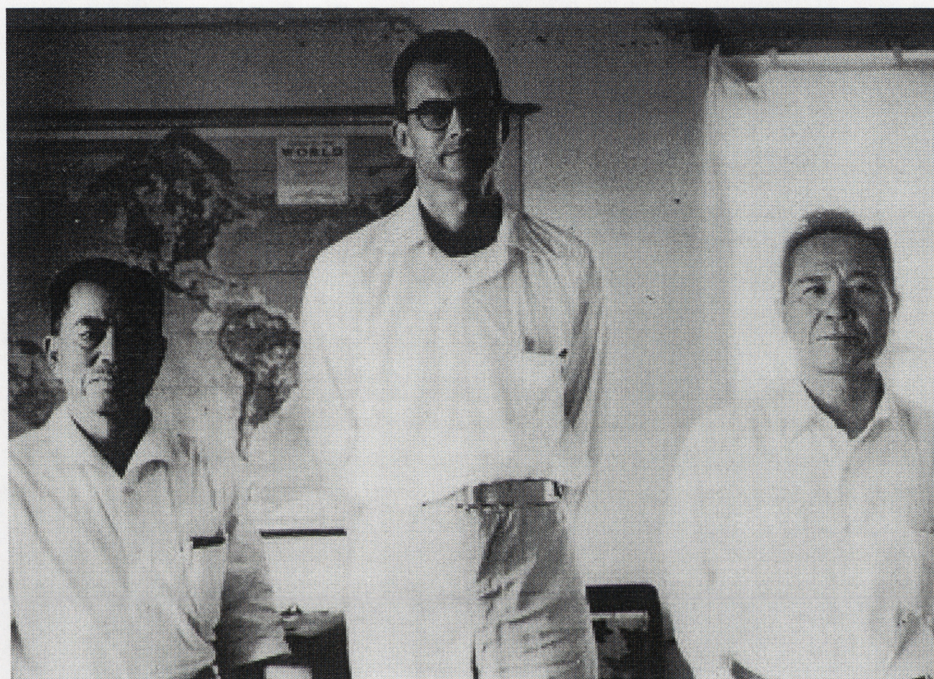
<sup>219</sup> Ibid.

<sup>220</sup> "Memorandum: Ryukyu Emigration – South America" September 20, 1952. NA RG.319.270.18. ex.60 box30.



conclusions on the subject were constantly cited to support the emigration plan by the U.S. authorities. James Tigner was effective in convincing as many people as possible about the urgency and convenience of the Ryukyuan emigration plan. Once Tigner had put forward his plan, the initiative to start with the program needed to come from higher rank officials.

**Figure 4.** Koshin Shikiya (Pdt. Ryukyu University), Dr. J. Tigner, and Taira Tatsuo (Gov. Okinawa) Naha 1951.<sup>221</sup>



Negotiations were conducted at different levels so as to bring about the Ryukyuan Emigration program. Firstly, the Deputy Governor of the Ryukyu Island and the Commander in Chief of the Far East Command agreed with the emigration plan and requested support from the Department of the Army. Lt. Colonel R.W. Allen, Chief of the Public Affairs Division helped to link the emigration plan and other U.S. agencies.<sup>222</sup> Then, the Public Affairs Division requested technical assistance to the American Foreign Operations Administration (FOA) in order to assess the financial and technical needs for implementing the Plan.<sup>223</sup> At the same time, negotiations with the Bolivian

<sup>221</sup> Museo Histórico Okinawa Bolivia オキナワボリビア 史資料館. <http://dms-okinawabolivia.eg.jomm.jp/top.html>Picture N°320. Visited on October 17, 2010.

<sup>222</sup> Letter from R.W. Allen to Mr. Peterson. August 28, 1953. NA RG.319.270.18. ex.60 box30.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid.



government started in 1953 and soon after the President of Bolivia approved the migration plan and allocated 2,500 hectares to the Uruma Society. Also, the Bolivian president promised land grants up to 50,000 hectares depending on the success of the program.<sup>224</sup> Since the main concern of the Bolivian government was the initial funding once the immigrants arrived, the Bolivian side requested that B\$.35,000,000 or about US\$ 139,000. be deposited into the Uruma's account before the arrival of any immigrant.<sup>225</sup> This problem was negotiated by FOA's representatives. In view of the fact that for the year 1953 the U.S. government had offered –as mentioned above– US\$ 9,000,000 to the Bolivian Government in aid, FOA representatives talked to Bolivian Foreign Minister who agreed to use some of these funds for colonization programs.<sup>226</sup>

**Figure 5.** Bolivian president Dr.Victor Paz Estensoro shaking hands with Inamine Ichiro. March 1954.<sup>227</sup>



<sup>224</sup> "Resettlement of Okinawan Emigrants in Bolivia" July 1, 1953. NA RG.319.270.18. ex.60 box30.

<sup>225</sup> "Memorandum for the record", November 10, 1953. NA RG.319.270.18. ex.60 box30.

<sup>226</sup> Ibid.

<sup>227</sup> Museo Histórico Okinawa Bolivia オキナワボリビア 史資料館. <http://dms-okinawabolivia.eg.jomm.jp/top.html> Picture N°316. Visited on October 17, 2010.



In addition, the government of the Ryukyu Islands sent an emigration mission to South America and the United States in 1953.<sup>228</sup> Inamine Ichiro, head of the mission, in the name of the Ryukyu Government met with the American officials of Point Four and of FOA in Bolivia to discuss further the scope of the program. Also, as commissioner of the GRI and representative of the Colony "Uruma", Inamine signed the act of agreement with the Bolivian Government stating the outline of the program.<sup>229</sup> He also met the highest American authorities involved in the process in a meeting in the Pentagon in March 1954. In that meeting the Department of the Army, Department of State, FOA, Pacific Science Board, and the GRI were represented.<sup>230</sup> Inamine's initial statement in that meeting followed the results of the Tigner's report and then summarized what had been achieved until then. Also, the Department of State agreed to approve the expenditure of B\$ 35,000,000 in the program.<sup>231</sup> Although the Ryukyuan Emigration program was approved by U.S. and Bolivian authorities and funds for the first group were guaranteed, the future of the emigration to South America required a permanent source of funds.<sup>232</sup>

It was clear that for ensuring the continuity of the emigration program a stable and permanent loan institution was needed. In August 1953 a joint military-civilian conference held in GRI agreed that the enactment of an emigration bank law will serve

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<sup>228</sup> The mission members were Senaga Hiroshi from Economic Policy Planning Bureau, GRI, and Inamine Ichiro, president of the Ryukyu Oil Company and president of the Ryukyu Overseas Association.

<sup>229</sup> "Act of Agreement Subscribed Between the Representatives of the Colony "Uruma", The Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Colonization and Point Four", March 8, 1954. RG.319.270.18. ex.60 box30.

<sup>230</sup> "Emigration of Ryukyuans to Bolivia", March 22, 1954. NA RG.319.270.18. ex.60 box30.

<sup>231</sup> Since the only problem for proceeding with the program was a delay from the Department of State in approving the Bolivian Government's expenditure of the B\$35,000,000.- Inamine in the Pentagon's meeting press on effectively Mr. John L. Topping, officer of the Bolivian Desk, to accelerate the process. Ibid.

<sup>232</sup> Emigration to Brazil was also discussed and it was agreed that only after sending the first group to Bolivia a Brazilian emigration program could be established. "Ryukyuan Emigration to Brazil and Bolivia" June 9, 1953. NA RG.319.270.18. ex.60 box30.

as legal basis for raising emigration funds.<sup>233</sup> On November 11, 1953, the Emigration Bank Bill was promulgated and became effective the same day (GRI Legislature, in Act No. 85 of 1953).<sup>234</sup> The Emigration Fund Foundation (also called Emigration Bank) was established with an initial authorized capital of R¥100,000,000 (or U\$833,333) to be subscribed by the GRI.<sup>235</sup> The foundation loaned money to emigrants for passage and settlement expenses at a 6% interest rate with provision for repayment within ten years.<sup>236</sup> With the new banking institution, the process which started with Tigner's trip culminated in a comprehensive emigration program which connected different groups within the United States sphere of influences.

In conclusion, the Okinawan emigration process to Bolivia was possible because of a strong networking between the pre-war Okinawan groups Ryukyu authorities (civilian and military) who desired to promote emigration. The initial hinge between these two groups was Dr. James Tigner, who took the Uruma Society's plan for immigration and promoted it everywhere. As the idea gained acceptance, the project was taken to a higher level and negotiated. One consequence of this was that the Uruma Society lost influence on its own project. On the other hand, the project became more elaborate, including support from a financial institution and the support from different U.S. organization in the region such as Point Four and FOA.

### 3.3. The emigrants' role in global U.S. policies.

We have so far discussed the socio-political situation in Okinawa, the hegemonic position of the U.S. in Asia and in the Americas, and the connections

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<sup>233</sup> Weekly Intelligence Digest, August 14, 1953. NA RG.319.270.18. ex.60 box30.

<sup>234</sup> Ryukyu Shimpō, November 12, 1953. NA RG.319.270.18. ex.60 box30.

<sup>235</sup> The first year GRI paid the sum of U\$ 83,333.- and the balance was paid within four years. "Financing the Ryukyu Emigration to South America", April 5, 1954. NA RG.319.270.18. ex.60 box30.

<sup>236</sup> The Emigration Bank was replaced in 1960 for the Ryukyuan Overseas Emigration Corporation. Civil Affairs Activities 1960 p29.

between Bolivia, Okinawa and the U.S. Now I would like to analyse the role of the Okinawan emigrants in the broader Cold War scenario, or in other words, the link between the emigrants (and their bodies) with the U.S. hegemonic power. I will focus on the first group of immigrants since they synthesised all the American and Okinawan expectations placed on emigration.

The Ryukyuan emigration project appealed to the population. Many Okinawans were upset with the U.S. administration and labour conditions (supra chapter 2). More than 50% of the emigrants had at one time or another been employed by the military bases, and according to a survey conducted in the early 1980s amongst the Okinawan first generation immigrants (Issei) in Bolivia, 10% of them cited their dislike of living under the U.S. occupation as a primary reason for their decision to emigrate.<sup>237</sup> So when the Government of the Ryukyu Islands officially launched the selection process for the first group of emigrants to go to Bolivia, an “emigration fever” -as Yoko Sellek named it- broke out in Okinawa.<sup>238</sup> There is evidence which shows how the project caught the attention and interest of thousands of Okinawans. Inamine Ichiro in a letter to Lt. Col. R.K. Lieding from the Department of the Army noted that the government of the Ryukyu Islands received thousands of applications for available places on the scheme, at a rate of 10 to 1. In Bolivia, the news was that the first group was selected from over

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<sup>237</sup> For survey results see Suzuki, *Embodying Belonging: Racializing Okinawa Diaspora in Bolivia and Japan*. p.30. According to Amemiya own field work, almost all immigrants had worked for the U.S. military. Kozy Amemiya, "The Bolivian Connection: U.S. Bases and Okinawa Emigration," in *JPRI Working Paper* (JPRI: Japan Policy Research Institute at the USF Center for the Pacific Rim, 1996).

<sup>238</sup> Sellek, "Migration and Nation-State: Structural Explanations for Emigration from Okinawa." p.84. There are differences among scholars about the total number of people that actually emigrated in the first year. Figures vary mainly due to the fact that some scholars do not consider the three emigrants that travelled by air, considering in the addition only those who did the trip by ship; also, the official number agreed in the immigration contract with the Bolivian government was set in four hundred so some authors follow that number; and finally, the fact that during the trip there were three newborns. According to Inamine, three people travelled by plane, 269 people travelled in June, 129 in July and together with the three newborns that makes 404 people. Inamine's letter to Lt. Col. Lieding, July 18, 1954. NA RG.319.270.18. ex.60 box30.

ten thousands requests.<sup>239</sup> The main point here is that the possibility to emigrate was considered to be a very good news for Okinawa as stated in the Ryukyu Shimbun "A good news that migration is possible (...) to Okinawa (...) this realization of emigration is the biggest news".<sup>240</sup> And also, the few selected to go in the first group carried with the expectation and hope of the rest of the island.<sup>241</sup>

The emigrants' bodies, particularly the ones of the first group of four hundred people approximately, became a site of great symbolic work and symbolic production, a material for a "corporal inscription".<sup>242</sup> In a Foucauldian interpretation, the bodies of the emigrants were also involved in a political field where power relations had a hold upon them; in this case, the politics of U.S. security policy in Asia and in the Americas. In other words, the bodies of the emigrants were a symbolic production of the U.S. control in Okinawa which made people willing to leave and at the same time, they were a useful force to expand the image of the charitable hand of the hegemon in Bolivia.<sup>243</sup> In this 'political economy' of the emigrants' bodies, the U.S. saw in the outcome of the Ryukyuan emigrational project a means to expand a positive image of itself in the Americas and Okinawa which ultimately was another weapon against U.S. critics abroad. Hence, the emigrants' bodies were connected with the global U.S. role and their success in Bolivia was related with the success of the hegemon to maintain stability in the liberal world.<sup>244</sup>

The U.S. authorities were concerned with the international repercussions on the U.S. image that the situation in Okinawa could have. Although the emigration program

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<sup>239</sup> Ibid. Also, Press Interview with Bolivian Minister of Agriculture, August 18, 1954. NA RG.319.270.18. ex.60 box30.

<sup>240</sup> "Daily Okinawa Press Summary" March 1, 1954. NA RG.319.270.18. ex.60 box30.

<sup>241</sup> Inamine's letter to Lt. Col. Lieding, July 18, 1954. NA RG.319.270.18. ex.60 box30.

<sup>242</sup> Discussion in Suzuki, *Embodying Belonging: Racializing Okinawa Diaspora in Bolivia and Japan*. pp.8-9.

<sup>243</sup> Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (London: Penguin Books Lt., 1975). pp.25-29.

<sup>244</sup> Webb and Krasner, "Hegemonic Stability Theory: An Empirical Assessment."



was conceived in Okinawa as a security policy to reduce population and social tension, by 1954 it was clear for the U.S. authorities in Okinawa and in Washington that the emigration program was not only about assisting Ryukyuans but also to improve U.S. image abroad. In the Committee on Foreign Relations in Washington there was a strong belief that the strict military control and land confiscation were fuel for Communist fires whom through propaganda could exploit these issues.<sup>245</sup> John A. Swezey, former chief, Immigration Section, USCAR, in a letter to Richard Nixon, Vice President of the U.S. in June 1954, stated as one of the emigration program's goals the "creation of better American-Ryukyuan and American-South American relations".<sup>246</sup> In his opinion, the "military occupation, lack of adequate compensation for the U.S.-used land, failure of the U.S. to define the international status of the Ryukyu Islands, and the personal relations between the U.S. and the Ryukyuan people are considerations contributing to anti-U.S. feelings in the Ryukyu Islands".<sup>247</sup> One of the main problems for Swezey was that these anti-U.S. feelings were used by Communists and Leftist groups abroad, so in order to thwart critics "U.S. sponsorship of emigration may be capitalized upon to U.S. advantage in psychological warfare upon U.S. critics abroad".<sup>248</sup> In other words, emigration was seen as a means to combat a propagandist front of the Cold War.

As president Eisenhower stressed during his visit to Okinawa in 1960, the U.S. wished to present to the world, the U.S.-Okinawa relations as "a splendid example of mutual benefits that result when people of goodwill work toward the common goal of

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<sup>245</sup> "Commentary on the Special Study Mission Report to the House Committee on Foreign Relations" n/d. NA RG.319.270.18. ex.60 box30.

<sup>246</sup> "Ryukyuan Emigration, An outline", letter from J.A. Swezey to Vice President R. Nixon. June 3, 1954. NA RG.319.270.18. ex.60 box30.

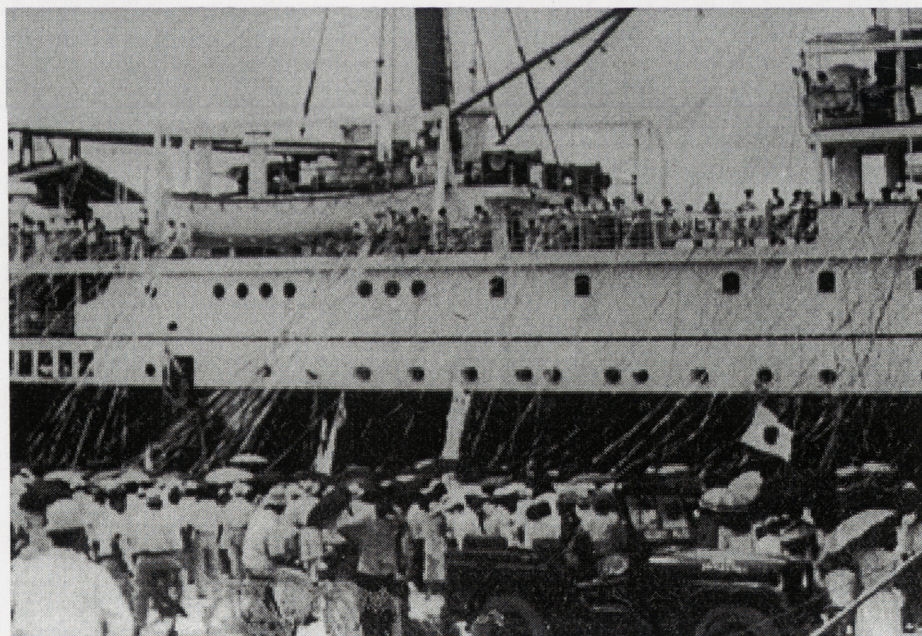
<sup>247</sup> Ibid.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid.



peace and friendship in freedom”.<sup>249</sup> Thus, the USCAR, worried for the U.S.-Okinawa relations and its impact overseas, organised different activities and organisations in Okinawa to promote a friendly relationship. For instance the Friendship Week of May 1953 had the political purpose of aiding “in a mutual feeling of trust and respect between the native population and the military forces in the Ryukyu” and for enhancing understanding between military and the people of Naha the Naha Ryukyuan-American Friendship Association was formed.<sup>250</sup> I do not attempt here to describe the whole U.S.-Okinawa friendship movement but to emphasize the importance that it had for U.S. authorities to promote a positive image of themselves in Okinawa and in the rest of the world. In this regard, the emigration program was an asset since put the U.S. in the clear position of benefactors of the Okinawans by organising and promoting emigration.<sup>251</sup>

**Figure 6.** Farewell to the first ship that went to South America in 1954.<sup>252</sup>



<sup>249</sup> “Remarks of the President at Kadena Air Force Base, Okinawa”, printed in The High Commissioner of the Ryukyu Islands, “Civil Affairs Activities in the Ryukyu Islands.”

<sup>250</sup> “Report of Government and Political Developments – May 1953” Jun 4, 1953. NA RG.260.B190.2/1.ex.2169.FRCs603. Folder 14.1.

<sup>251</sup> “Daily Okinawa Press Summary” March 1, 1954. NA RG.319.270.18. ex.60 box30.

<sup>252</sup> Museo Histórico Okinawa Bolivia オキナワボリビア 史資料館. <http://dms-okinawabolivia.eg.jomm.jp/top.html> Picture N°007. Visited on October 17, 2010.



Nevertheless, the Ryukyuan emigration was a double-edge sword for U.S interests. A well developed and successful emigration process could nourish a positive image of the U.S. military occupation in Okinawa and U.S. aid in South America. But if the emigration program was delayed hindering the opportunity of a better life to some Okinawans, or even worse, if the Ryukyuan emigrants were not thriving in their new destination, the U.S. image would pay the political costs for such a “failure”. For this reason it was imperative for the U.S. to provide as much assistance as possible to the emigrants once in Bolivia. Norman D. King, Chief of the Public Affairs Division called for the State Department to assume responsibility of providing protection for the émigrés, because “failure to do this, will undoubtedly result in assumption of responsibility by Japanese Mission” and it could have aired the idea of U.S. lack of concern for their Okinawan subjects.<sup>253</sup> Also, the news that the settlement of a Japanese Government sponsored colony was being discussed with the Bolivian authorities ignited the preoccupation of the U.S. authorities.<sup>254</sup> C.F. Hawley, officer in charge of Japanese Affairs in the State Department suggested that “it would be rather embarrassing if the Japanese started their emigration program and we do nothing” so it was necessary to start as soon as possible with the selection of emigrants and their travel preparations.<sup>255</sup> This was very important because, as mentioned earlier, the emigrants’ failure to achieve a self-sustainable life in Bolivia would be considered also an U.S. failure and eventually utilised in anti-U.S. propaganda by Leftist and Communists in Japan or elsewhere.

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<sup>253</sup> “FOA Report on Emigration Possibilities in Bolivia”, September 3, 1954. NA RG.319.270.18. ex.60 box30. For a description of the ambiguous status of the immigrants in Bolivia see Sellek, “Migration and Nation-State: Structural Explanations for Emigration from Okinawa.” pp.84-86.

<sup>254</sup> For a study on the Japanese community in Bolivia see Stephen Thompson, “San Juan Yapacaní: A Japanese Pioneer Colony in Eastern Bolivia” (University of Illinois at Urbana-Campaign, 1970).

<sup>255</sup> “Memorandum for the record”, November 10, 1953. NA RG.319.270.18. ex.60 box30.



**Figure 7.** The Okinawan migrants in Uruma, Bolivia. September 1954.<sup>256</sup>



To sum up, the bodies of the emigrants were not only marked with the causes that propelled their departure but also they bared the corporal inscription of their linkage with the United States within a propaganda context. The Ryukyuan emigrants were considered the U.S.'s unofficial ambassadors in a way. They were symbols of the U.S. power and what it is more relevant, living evidence of the U.S.-Okinawa friendship and the benevolence of the U.S. authority in the Ryukyu Islands as well as in Bolivia. Therefore, the success of the immigration process was not only relevant for the Okinawan people as they could expand the number of hosting countries and reduce social and political tensions in the islands, but also for the U.S. as they were fighting a war that required to maintain an image of moral superiority.

### 3.4. Chapter Conclusions

The Ryukyuan Emigration Program was first thought of as a policy to improve security rather than a means for improving people's life. However, the emigration

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<sup>256</sup> Museo Histórico Okinawa Bolivia オキナワボリビア 史資料館. <http://dms-okinawabolivia.eg.jomm.jp/top.html> Picture N°319. Visited on October 17, 2010.



program could never be initiated without a series of connections which enabled and explained the option of promoting emigration to Bolivia. Hence, the main conclusions to be drawn are:

There was a strong connection between the U.S. hemispheric interests in South America, particularly in Bolivia, and the concession from the Bolivian government to allow and allocate land for the Okinawan immigrants. Development policies were, as explained above, part of a hemispheric strategy to strengthen democratic governments and diminish Communist groups in the continent. Thus, the United States as hegemon of the liberal world, in order to ensure political stability and support regional markets, delivered large-scale military and financial aid (part of which was used to fund the Okinawan immigration) as well as helping in a small scale to certain development projects such as agricultural international migration. Also, Bolivia was an ideal place for Ryukyuan resettlement due to the existence of an active Okinawan community in Bolivia. In this regard, the connection made by Tigner between the local Okinawan-Bolivian and U.S. interests in Asia triggered the emigration program and was conducive for the engagement of higher rank officials with the project. Finally, the emigrants played a role of reflecting the U.S. power everywhere. The Okinawan people's distress, their fervent and enthusiastic support to emigration, and their directing of migration to Bolivia show the imprints of an occupied land where people lived in poverty. In the emigrants themselves the power of the United States gained visibility; therefore, the U.S. authorities sought to use the emigration program and the émigrés as part of their Cold War propaganda.

## CHAPTER 4

### Conclusion

The program that promoted emigration from Okinawa to South America, particularly to Bolivia, presents many fascinating issues connected with the American postwar strategic position in the Pacific and Asia and the role that Okinawa and its inhabitants played for the U.S. global security strategy. The ambiguous international status of the islanders perpetuated U.S. control over the islands and provided the basis for more radical measures. The promotion of emigration was integrally connected with U.S. military objectives in the region and the necessity to “secure” the islands from social unrest. Finally, the fact that Okinawan emigrants travelled to Bolivia connects the U.S. global strategy to halt Communism in both sides of the Pacific whilst supporting a friendly nation.

In relation to international migration theories, the study of the Okinawan emigration program in the 1950s highlights the fact that security considerations may play an important part in migration, and thus that both sender and receiver states may play a major role in international migration. Since the end of World War II, U.S. strategic objectives in Asia have shaped the sociopolitical conditions of the Okinawan people. The control of the islands, confirmed by article 3 of the San Francisco Peace Treaty and rationalized in Dulles’s ‘residual sovereignty’ theory, allowed the U.S. military to transform Okinawa into a true American bulwark in the Pacific. For the U.S. policy makers the security of ‘the keystone’ in the Pacific was connected with the security of the free world. Therefore, controlling the local population was an important consideration in the global U.S. security. The role of the state in creating and promoting

migration policies has to be seen in this context. Hence, this thesis helps, firstly, to highlight the role of the sender state as a main actor in international migration; and secondly, to show that security considerations can be part of emigration projects.

As a result of the U.S. control and transformation of Okinawa, serious issues emerged: among them poverty, loss of property and demographic expansion. The inhabitants of the Ryukyu Islands grew hostile to the U.S. military and voiced their opposition through different social and political movements such as the “reversion movement”. These social pressures have to be counted as key factors that propelled emigration in Okinawa; however, the emigration movement could not have materialized without the consent of the American authorities who agreed to organize, fund and promote it. The military government saw in all these problems a true threat to its strategic objectives in the Ryukyu Islands, and therefore it considered promoting migration as a security policy. Since the United States was the world’s hegemonic power in the 1950s and as hegemon had to look after the stability in the liberal system, the “Ryukyuan Emigration Program” was supported with the aim of protecting the political stability of Okinawa and thus of the liberal world.

The emigration program also needs to be considered from a global perspective. The U.S. authorities tried not only to put forward security policies in Okinawa but also assist friendly governments. The initial hosting nation was Bolivia, a country economically dominated by the United States in the early 1950s. For the United States, Bolivia was a valuable nation in their struggle against international communism; therefore, millions of dollars in aid (mainly foodstuff) went to support the Andean nation development programs and to keep Communists away. Bolivia’s agrarian reform was aimed to increase the production of staples and in this way support the nation’s economy. However, the main problem for pursuing agrarian reform was the lack of

experienced farmers within Bolivia willing to migrate to the department of Santa Cruz, a region with rich soil and sparse population. The U.S. saw promoting Okinawan migration to Santa Cruz as a way not only to quell social tensions in the Ryukyu Islands but also to assist the Bolivian economy. The reasons behind the selection of Bolivia as destination for the Okinawan emigrants again reflect the U.S. global security policy against communism. Moreover, the Ryukyuan Emigration program was also used by the U.S. authorities to promote the 'good face' of the liberal world. The program gained visibility particularly because of the political and social conditions in Okinawa. Therefore, the fate of the emigration program was connected with the image that the U.S. wanted to show to the rest of the world. In the context of propaganda, the image of the U.S. as reflected in the emigrants' bodies was another weapon to fulfil the United States role during the Cold War.

The Hegemonic Stability theory provides a theoretical background for understanding Ryukyuan emigration in the 1950s. The HST places the hegemonic state in the centre of the international economic relations as the element that ensures stability in the economical world order. We could also expect that the hegemon, in the name of the liberal democratic world, could exert its power in social and military areas as well. In the Cold War years, ideology permeated the policy making process in the hegemonic country. The Ryukyu Emigration program was the product of U.S. military requirements in the islands and gained support in the State Department since it could benefit other regions. Therefore, the Okinawan migration to Bolivia is a good example of a policy which reflects the a) American security needs in Okinawa, and b) the global scope of the U.S. hegemonic role.

The study of the Ryukyuan emigration to Latin America can be further developed by approaching this case from other perspectives. For instance, in terms of



the inhabitants of Okinawa and the USCAR administration we could ask to what extent the emigrational program was successful in dealing with the overpopulation and social security problems. Also, we could follow up by analysing the first groups of émigrés and their lives in Bolivia: did they obtain what was promised when they left Okinawa? Was life in Bolivia better than in the Ryukyus? Another line of research could connect the émigré with the U.S. Cold War policy; we could ask what impact had the fate of the émigrés in the hosting countries for the U.S. image overseas? How the American authorities managed the new communities in Bolivia? Finally, another line of research could consist in trying to find similar cases of colonial/semi-colonial emigration programs. What can we learn from the U.S. migration policies in other territories like Panama, Guam, or Bonin islands? Eventually, we could try to find similar examples in the British Empire in the nineteenth century that could have similar characteristics. In sum, security policies may affect the movement of people, and finding further evidence of this is an open challenge for future research.

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